

# LABOR AGE

THE VOICE OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR

## The A. F. of L. Stands Pat

LOUIS STANLEY

### *Significance of the 50th Convention*

A. J. MUSTE

## Lying Againts Labor

EUGENE L. SCHOSBERG

### *Russia Under Review*

NOVEMBER, 1930

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Vol. XIX—No. 11      November, 1930

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## IN THIS ISSUE

THE Boston A. F. of L. Convention will go down in history as unique for many reasons. It is probable that the officials knowingly had no intention of creating some of that uniqueness for which the convention will be mainly noted, yet for others theirs will have to be the responsibility. The fact that it will be known as an American Legion Convention, for example, can be set down to a combination of unfortunate circumstances. But that the convention epitomizes the standpattism of the A. F. of L. is something else again. Louis Stanley, contributing editor of the NEW LEADER, whose article on "Labor's Dollars" in last month's LABOR AGE created a sensation, reports the Boston convention in "The A. F. of L. Stands Pat."

**F**Ollowing Mr. Stanley's chronological report, A. J. Muste, Chairman of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, picks out the most significant developments at Boston and in "Significance of the A. F. of L.'s Fiftieth Convention" interprets them in the light of the general trend of the Movement, with particular emphasis upon the contemporary problems crowding the labor world. The fact that President Hoover was honored by an invitation to address labor at its jubilee anniversary may seem unimportant. But the author recalls that it is 13 years since such an honor was bestowed upon a United States President, and interprets its meaning.

**A**LFRID BAKER LEWIS, at present candidate for governor on the Socialist ticket of Massachusetts, and secretary of the New England District of the Socialist Party, takes time off to tell us how impractical are the "practical" results of labor's non-partisan political policy.

In "Political Impotence of Massachusetts Labor" he relates how crooked is the path of those who attempt to punish and reward indiscriminately.

**L** YING Against Labor" presents the essential facts about how big business controls the press. In this era, when most of us are so far removed from the scenes of every day action, and when trends and forces intertwine to such an amazing extent, the press can hold in the hollows of its hands the emotions and urges of mankind. That it does is proved by the fact that it changed this nation from one of strict neutrality to the most vicious "hun" haters during the late war, practically over night. The same results are evident in the field of labor relations. Eugene L. Schosberg, active in an industrial research group among students, has undertaken the task of tracing the ownership and its resultant bias against labor in the newspapers and magazines of the United States.

**T**HIS month, under the usual heading of "The March of the Machine," Justus Ebert, Editor of the LITHOGRAPHERS JOURNAL, brings up the oft repeated assertion that the machine makes work. We have all been told more or less that the machine makes possible mass production, thus making unit costs lower, thus reducing commodity prices and increasing wages, thus increasing mass consumption. What happens to this beautiful theory, if not already exploded by the present depression, is entirely disposed of in this article.

**L**OUIS F. BUDENZ, Executive Secretary of the C. P. L. A., comes back in this issue with "Following the Fight" in which he relates what practical steps are being taken to place the fight where it belongs, in front of the open shop mill gates.

**A**GAIN the progressives are reminded that the new social order, or steps in that direction, can only be achieved by concerted action by every one really interested in translating phrases into actualities. "All Hands On Deck" is such a reminder, recalling what the C. P. L. A. is doing and what C. P. L. A.ers can do. It is a call to action for a program that can be made as wide as the progressives want it to be.

OUR readers are invited to pay special attention to our book review section under the heading, "Say It With Books." They will note that we are devoting more space to the presentation of new books worth while by reviewers who are experts on the subjects with which the volumes deal. In this issue books on Russia, Italy, Unemployment, Education and International Politics, etc. are considered.

THE other usual features complete this issue.

## A LOOK AT RUSSIA IN 1930

By *Coleman B. Cheney*

in the

## **DECEMBER LABOR AGE**

# • LABOR • AGE •

November, 1930

## EDITORIALS

**W**E are in the midst of "the grim anniversary" as someone has called it, of the stock exchange crisis of October-November, 1929. It will be recalled that there

was a bad break on October 24, then a temporary recovery and then a prolonged crash from October

28 to November 14. Burton Rascoe in the *NEW REPUBLIC* has done a service by calling attention to the considered and sober opinions expressed by our great leaders of government and finance between the 24th and 28th of October of last year. President Hoover, of course, heads the list with the first of several hundred statements assuring the nation that nothing had happened. Quoth Herbert: "The fundamental business of the country, that is, production and distribution of commodities, is on a sound and prosperous basis." Charles Mitchell of the great National City Bank, who had been a great prosperity booster throughout the stock inflation period, observed sagely: "I still see nothing to worry about." A. W. Loasby, president of the Equitable Trust; M. C. Brush, of the American International Corporation; Walter Teagle, president of Standard Oil of New Jersey; Samuel Vauclain of the Baldwin Locomotive Works; George M. Reynolds of Chicago; A. H. Giannini of the Bank of America; Charles Schwab, and Arthur Reynolds of the Continental Illinois Bank of Chicago, were among the many who issued similar misleading optimistic statements. Typical of them all is Mr. Reynolds' sage and confident remark: "This crash is not going to have much effect on business."

This was the sum total of the wisdom which the leaders of the nation, those who are supposed to be at the controls of our vast economic machine, had to offer at a moment when the economic well-being of the entire nation,—yes, of the world—at a moment when the very life of millions of human beings, hung in the balance. These men are supposed to "know their onions." We are assured whenever the faintest spark of rebellion against the status-quo flames in the breasts of the people, that it would be suicidal to take the management of our complex system out of the hands of these noble, wise, experienced heads.

In which case may the Lord help us. What these leaders had to offer in that critical moment last year was calculated not to prevent or mitigate disaster and distress, but to bring on disaster. They chorused lustily: "Everything is fine," when everything was as rotten as could be.

Did they know better and lie to us? Or did they not know any better? Our private opinion is that there was a good deal of both ignorance and deceit involved. We need not argue that point, however. In either case these heads are obviously not so wise, so noble, so infallible and indispensable as they themselves make out to be. They

were helpless to prevent, if they did not actually bring disaster upon us. They are now making equally imposing, equally hollow gestures about relieving distress. They are not doing a single fundamental thing to prevent a repetition of disaster for the masses,—nothing about raising wages, shortening hours, redistributing the national income, unemployment insurance. They will do nothing. Let Labor wrest control from them. It need not worry about being able to improve on our present industrial, financial and political overlords.

**E**LECTION DAY is rapidly approaching as this issue of *LABOR AGE* goes to press. *LABOR AGE* is not the organ of any particular party. We stand for the building of a labor party in America. That does not mean, however, that we are indifferent to what happens in elections today.

Workers and all sympathizers of labor should vote against the two old parties, Republican and Democratic, on November 4. How any intelligent workers or labor sympathizers can vote for the present Republican administration, which by its ballyhoo about prosperity, helped to stimulate the orgy of speculation on the stock exchange and so aggravated the ultimate crash; which has sought to achieve prosperity by the asinine method of repeatedly proclaiming that there is no depression; and which in the Smoot-Hawley bill enacted the most iniquitous tariff in our history and so helped to bring about the condition of suspicion and bitterness between nations which is rapidly dragging Western civilization to the precipice of another war, is beyond our comprehension. Nor is there any reason for thinking that a party of Tammany, Raskob and Company would do anything more for the masses if it was in power.

Vote your labor convictions and interests in this election.

Do not be frightened by that ancient bugaboo about throwing away your vote if you do not cast it for one of the old parties. It has been proven repeatedly that nothing will drive them into action more swiftly and surely than the threat of another party getting the confidence of the people. Let there be a huge working-class vote for working-class candidates in this election, and some of them may get elected, which would be decidedly refreshing. But whether or not a single working-class candidate got elected to office, there would be such a scurrying in our state legislatures and federal congress to get some of the labor and social legislation passed to still the protest of the people, as we have not witnessed in years.

A falling away of support from the old parties and the rolling up of an impressive protest vote might prove to be the match which would fire a train of enthusiasm for in-

dependent political action throughout the land. Then, with a clear-cut issue between a party representing the vested interests and property rights, and a party representing human rights and social control of basic resources and industries, the farce of voting every year between "tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee" would be ended and therewith realism and possibly decency might be brought back into our political life.

**THOSE** interested in the fortunes of American labor were pleasantly astounded when the American Federation of Labor, at its New Orleans Convention in 1928, issued its resounding call to

### "Double The Membership" Shelved

"double the membership in 1929." While most every knowing person realized that

this slogan was one of those campaign phrases used more for arousing to action rather than for the establishment of an actual goal to be achieved, many did hope, nevertheless, that it would stir the unions to special effort which would result in substantial membership gains.

When the A. F. of L. again met in Toronto the year following, the reported membership showed no increase. But nothing daunted, the slogan so courageously proclaimed in 1928 was renewed, if not with equal vigor, then at least with some hope. The delegates, upon leaving for their respective homes, were still admonished to do everything possible to "double the membership."

But in 1930 at Boston nothing at all was heard of the slogan. Delegates were neither reminded that such a laudable urge existed nor requested to extend their efforts in that direction. "Double the membership" as a fighting phrase became history.

Perhaps the report of the Executive Council to the effect that the Federation increased its membership during the past year by 30,000 may have satisfied every one that substantial gains were being made. Perhaps with this report before them, the Federation decided that no greater urging for new gains was necessary. Perhaps these speculations are true.

But they are not. Every delegate to the A. F. of L. convention at Boston, every officer and practically every visitor knew that the 30,000 increase were ghost figures, representing no worker of flesh and blood. And they knew it because of this very simple fact. The Illinois miners had during the past year seceded from the United Mine Workers of America. Regardless of their own claims, the minimum membership they can be credited with is 50,000. Yet the United Mine Workers of America, in reporting its membership to the A. F. of L., paid per capita on 400,000 members, the same number they have been credited with year after year. This one item alone wipes out the 30,000 reported gain of the Federation and leaves it with a loss of 20,000.

But that is not all. The United Mine Workers have actually no more than 103,000 members. If that number is used for the U. M. W. strength instead of the 400,000 reported, where does that leave the Federation? And while we are on the subject we may as well go a little further. Many other organizations report the same membership year after year to the A. F. of L. Such stable membership is remarkable in view of the fluctuations in every industry of which most every one is aware.

Daniel Tobin, President of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Stablemen and Helpers in the October, 1930 issue of his magazine, is more frank:

"It is unpleasant for me to relate to you," he writes,

"that many strong International Unions, both affiliated and not affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, have been set back substantially, numerically and financially, during the past five years. Organizations of Labor which a few years ago were considered bulwarks of strength are at this time in such a weakened condition as to be almost helpless and unable to resist the encroachments being made on them by the enemies of labor and the unscrupulous employers of their membership. There never was a time in the past thirty years when labor organizations generally were in as weakened a condition as they are at the present time." Mr. Tobin, until November, 1928, was Treasurer of the American Federation of Labor.

We make this report with sadness and not in a spirit of gloating. We emphasize the discrepancy between the real and fancied strength of the A. F. of L. because we can only see tremendous harm to a movement that is so helpless as to knowingly practice the art of self-deception not only on itself but on the millions of workers who look to the Federation for leadership.

If the A. F. of L. is willing in the face of declining strength to drop its slogan of "double the membership" for a paper achievement or because it cannot stir up enough enthusiasm to make it a living phrase, then it is time we all knew it and started on a new tack.

**WHILE** 5,000 textile workers are battling in Danville, Va., for the rights of organization, persistent in the fight to make Southern workers free, a fight so auspiciously started at the Toronto A. F. of L. convention

**For Want of a Penny** last year, another fight closely related to the Dan-

ville workers' struggle was ingloriously lost at Boston, 1930. To assure adequate support in the southern organization drive the United Textile Workers introduced a resolution calling upon the Federation to amend the constitution to levy a per capita tax of one cent a month as a special fund with which to back up the southern workers. Before this resolution ever came to the floor of the convention, Thomas F. McMahon, the U. T. W. President, was assured that he was waging a losing fight. It was thumbs down for any assessment that would have meant an annual income of about \$300,000 for the organization drive.

When this resolution was reported to the convention, therefore, McMahon arose and asked leave to introduce a substitute resolution calling upon the Executive Council to devise ways and means to raise a defense fund to be used in any emergency in organization work. Because it was after the time when resolutions could be accepted, it required unanimous consent by the delegates to have it considered. This unanimity was not forthcoming. Up rose one from the group of carpenters' delegates and objected. That was sufficient to shelve the whole matter, as McMahon had already withdrawn his original resolution. It may be noted in passing, that when the first letter asking aid for the textile drive reached the Executive Council of the Carpenters' Union last winter, while the same Executive Council was disporting itself at the Carpenters' Home at Lakeland, Florida, its decision then was, as reported previously in LABOR AGE: "Communications from the A. F. of L. asking for aid for relief of Textile Workers was read as information and request denied."

The only hope now left for those who are starving on the picket line before the textile mills, is the help that can come to them from the letter to all unions already sent out by President Green. Last year, in response to a similar

cail, the Federation raised only about \$40,000. Last year was still nominally a year of prosperity. This year, with the tremendous unemployment which affects union members as well as non-union workers, the response can be predicted to be far less.

Nevertheless, we sincerely hope that sufficient funds will come from that appeal to safeguard the strike at Danville. C. P. L. A.ers and all other progressives are urged to give their share so that the strikers shall be able to hold out to eventual victory.

Yet however fine such a response may be, this method cannot remain a permanent procedure for raising funds. The South will not be organized that way. The Conference for Progressive Labor Action, at the very start of the southern campaign, called for a \$1,000,000 fund as a minimum with which to carry on this most important campaign in the whole history of the Federation. The action of the Boston convention is telling the world that if not at first, then now its southern campaign is not a serious matter.

For want of a penny the whole future of the American Labor Movement is seriously jeopardized. For want of a penny the heroic struggles of the textile workers are permitted to dissolve themselves into a stampede of hunger back to the mills under any conditions. For want of a penny, the workers who died at Marion, at Gastonia, and the others who are even today swinging sledges on the prison rock piles, have sacrificed themselves for a farce, for a call to arms which they took seriously, but which the American Federation of Labor issued with reservations.

One of the blackest spots in the whole history of the American Labor Movement will be recorded when this episode is written. It will be noted that in 1930 the promises of the American Federation of Labor were not worth a penny.

**A**S we go to press the newspapers are filled with suggestions, plans, ideas and programs dedicated to the relief of the millions of unemployed. Even the White House, so long reticent in recognizing anything seriously wrong with industry, has now acknowledged a

state of starvation to exist and has appointed another commission to tackle the problem. The measures proposed by financiers, industrialists and politicians do everything for the worker except give him anything approaching effective relief. It can safely be predicted that when all the noise, enthusiasm and ballyhoo shall have subsided, the conditions of want and misery facing American labor shall have hardly been touched.

As fantastic as some of the schemes are to meet the present emergency none are so brazen as the one put in operation by some offices and factories, of deducting a dollar a month from their employees for the relief of the unemployed. This seems to be reaching heights of arrogance hitherto unequalled by the most thoughtless of autocrats. Aside from the fact that such procedure does nothing to get down to the causes of the present trouble, the unequal distribution of wealth—for taking dollars from workers' pockets to give to others with fewer dollars merely reduces wage standards all around—it is an insult flung in the faces of those workers who are employed. It makes labor pay for the relief for which the employers take the credit. Only in a country where the workers are thoroughly cowed can such a plan be put in operation with safety.

And the situation is not without its humor, ironical as that humor may be. In one noted automobile town the

workers were called upon to pay that monthly dollar for the unemployed. The Community Chest of the same town, unable to obtain the usual contributions from these workers, had to curtail its activities because of its smaller income. The great ado which this automobile concern is making about its program towards the relief of the unemployed is a fake boast. Actually that particular community is not raising a cent more than it always has—only this time some one else gets the credit.

Much the same can be said of the White House plan to stagger industry. Its practical result will be to reduce the standard of living to the starvation level for all workers. The total consuming power of the masses of people will not be changed one iota.

Much more can be said on the subject. But anything further merely points to the same conclusion: Until we shall have in this country an adequate compulsory unemployment insurance system we shall continue to have the evasions, hypocrisy, hunger and degradation, now so characteristic of American life.

**I**N a few weeks the Round Table Conference which is to discuss the future of India is to meet in London. Thus the British Labor Government will be subjected to another severe and uncomfortable test. It can ill afford to be a party now to a farce at which the whole world looks on. Yet that is what is likely to happen.

The prestige of the labor government has gone down rapidly and steadily in recent months. It has failed to bring down the unemployment figures, it will not adopt a protective tariff policy, and so the Dominion representatives are leaving the Imperial Conference in a mood of disappointment. It is in wrong with the Jewry of the world because of its handling of the Palestine situation. In some of these fields its policy has been largely right, in others seemingly wrong. In some instances its difficulties are mainly due to forces over which it has no control, in others to its own failure to develop the necessary wisdom and courage, or to live up to its own Socialist convictions and promises. The upshot is, however, in every case the same—a loss of prestige.

Now they must tackle the Indian problem, and it seems that the forthcoming Round Table Conference on the subject is almost certainly doomed to failure in advance. Indians representing various groups in that vast land have been invited to sit down with representatives of Great Britain, but there will be no representatives of the Indian National Congress, of Gandhi and his followers, of those, in other words, who have been carrying on the campaign for Indian independence. It is as if Lord North and King George III, in 1776 had called a round table conference on the situation in the American Colonies and had invited Tories of various complexions, but had made it impossible for George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, John Hancock or any of that group, to attend!

So far Ramsay MacDonald has dealt with Gandhi, the pacifist, much more severely and autocratically than the British government dealt with Ramsay MacDonald, the pacifist, in 1914. Is it possible that MacDonald will redeem himself and show that he can do better by an Indian pacifist and patriot than a British war government did by him? If some such miracle does not happen, the record of this second labor government in Great Britain will be one in which Socialists and progressive laborites throughout the world can find hardly a single clear-cut ground for pride and satisfaction.

## TIME FOR A NEW LINE



Drawn for Labor Age by Jack Anderson  
 Membership figures of the A. F. of L. are at a standstill. Unless new policies and  
 new methods are adopted 90 per cent of the workers will continue to ignore the  
 message of organization.

# The A. F. of L. Stands Pat

**By LOUIS STANLEY**

If one were to characterize in one word the recent convention of the American Federation of Labor which opened in Boston on October 6, that word would be STANDPATISM. The New Orleans convention in 1928 outlawed Brookwood and took a backward step. The Toronto convention last year inaugurated the southern organization campaign and took a forward step. This year's convention neither moved forward nor backward; it just stood still. It was as if the A. F. of L. on the occasion of its fiftieth annual convention were announcing to the world that it had paused to mark time.

The Boston convention was so boring that it was fascinating. Little business was expected to come before the convention and little did. Despite early adjournments the observance of Columbus Day and the oratory of what President William Green calls "distinguished guests," there was not enough matter to come before the convention to require the usual rushing through at the end. On the contrary the last session closed before the regular adjournment hour.

There were four things of importance to progressive laborites which were expected to come before the convention: (1) the situation in the miners' union, (2) the unemployment problem and unemployment insurance, (3) the five-hour day, and (4) financial help for the southern drive.

## Insurgent Miners Absent

The expectation that the internal struggle among the miners would come before the convention proved to be unfounded. The representatives of the Illinois faction of the United Mine Workers did not appear at Boston either because of lack of funds or a recognition of the futility of their efforts after the rejection of their cause by the Illinois State Federation of Labor. The Illinois group did send its usual letter to President Green of the A. F. of L. asking him to call an impartial convention of the miners, but the A. F. of L. delegates only knew of this through the newspapers. Under the circumstances the United Mine Workers once again was credit-

ed with 400,000 members, though all the world knows that less than half that number would be a generous concession. John L. Lewis, President of the Indianapolis faction, and his friends, therefore, remained as strongly entrenched as ever. The credentials committee made its report, which was accepted by the delegates indifferently.

The communication from Secretary-treasurer John H. Walker of the Illinois organization of the United Mine Workers was taken up by the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor on the Sunday following the first week of the convention. It is said that Lewis was invited to attend the sessions of the Council to discuss the situation but that he remained ensconced in his room in the aristocratic Copley-Plaza Hotel and did not deign to accept the invitation. President William Green is thought by many to be sympathetic with the elements in the Illinois miners' union and his love for Lewis is not unbounded. He is distressed by the factionalism in the United Mine Workers and would like to see peace achieved. Nevertheless, because of Lewis' power in the U. M. W. and his 4,000 votes in the A. F. of L. convention, Green has had to take the legalistic position and give his support more and more to the Indianapolis organization of the miners. For this compliance he was rewarded twice at the convention, once when the great John L. himself graced the convention with his presence to nominate Green as President of the A. F. of L., reminding the latter that he had nominated him five years ago to succeed Samuel Gompers, and the second time, when Thomas Kennedy, Secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers with headquarters at Indianapolis, presented to the President of the A. F. of L. on behalf of the miners of northern Pennsylvania, a chunk of anthracite coal upon which was carved a mule driver, his car and mule, and the inscription "From Mule Driver to President of the A. F. of L." Green is now obligated to the Lewis machine more than ever.

The problem of unemployment came before the convention through the report of the resolutions committee headed by Matthew Woll which had

before it the recommendations made by the executive council in its annual report and through several resolutions submitted by delegates. The executive council, it will be recalled, had outlined the following ten-point program for the relief of unemployment:

1. Reduction in the hours of work.
2. Stabilization of industry.
3. Efficient management in production and in sales policies.
4. Nation-wide system of unemployment exchanges.
5. Adequate statistical records.
6. Use of public works to meet cyclical unemployment.
7. Vocational guidance and retraining.
8. Special study of technological unemployment.
9. Study of relief proposals.
10. Education for life.

At the session of the Executive Council immediately preceding the convention President Green had voiced his opposition to unemployment insurance, although the New York State Federation of Labor had only recently declared itself in favor of this form of social legislation. Other labor bodies took similar action. The report of the Executive Council to the convention under point nine stated:

"We recommend that the executive council make a thorough investigation of all plans, legislative and otherwise, that have been discussed or suggested for the express purpose by which relief may be accorded those who are suffering from forced unemployment."

## Hoover Asked to Appoint Committee

The resolutions committee approved all the recommendations of the Executive Council, and then taking a hint from various students of the problem and from Mayor Frank Murphy of Detroit who in his address to the convention had told of his experience in mobilizing the relief of the unemployed, the committee recommended:

"That the executive council be instructed to request the President of the United States to appoint immediately a national committee to recommend measures for immediate relief, having in mind the proposals that can be carried out by private and quasi-public agencies and enterprises, as well as by departments of the Federal government, the departments of state governments and by mu-

nicipalities, counties, school districts and other divisions of government."

The Executive Council was also instructed to call on state federations and city central bodies to work for the creation of local committees which would cooperate with the national committee and initiate measures of their own. The council was also directed to find ways and means of carrying out this program in cities where no central bodies exist and in the territories of Alaska, Hawaii and Porto Rico. Canadian city central bodies were urged to cooperate with the Canadian Trades and Labor Congress in promoting unemployment relief measures. The resolutions committee emphasized that it wanted relief measures now rather than action by federal or state legislatures later.

### Unemployment Insurance Discussed

The outstanding episode of the convention was undoubtedly the discussion of unemployment insurance. It compensated for all the dullness of the rest of the proceedings. The delegate of the New York State Federation of Labor, John Sullivan, had previously announced to reporters his intention to back down on unemployment insurance and let the Executive Council have its own way. However, resolutions covering the question had been introduced by Thomas A. Slavens of the Newport, R. I. Central Labor Union; Henry E. Richard of the International Wood Carvers Association; the delegation of the United Textile Workers, and finally, Florence C. Hanson of the American Federation of Teachers, who submitted a plan identical with that of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, the essence of which is to make the insurance "A charge on industry in the same way as workmen's compensation for accidents." The resolutions committee's report is an historical document worthy of careful study:

" . . . The issue presented is one of vital importance. It involves the question of whether the American Federation of Labor shall continue to hew to the line in demanding a greater freedom for the working people of America, or whether liberty shall be sacrificed in a degree sufficient to enable the workers to obtain a small measure of unemployment relief under government supervision and control.

"In his recent declaration against compulsory unemployment insurance or the so-called 'dole', President Green accurately reflected the general policy of the

A. F. of L. as it now is. Shall that policy be changed? An answer to that question is of the highest importance. . . ."

After referring to the A. F. of L.'s opposition to the registration of aliens, the committee added:

"Every system of unemployment insurance advanced here contemplates supervision and control by both Federal and state governments and will require registration, not only of the aliens among the workers, but of all workers.

"Can a process, which we have denounced as being extremely bad when its application to alien workers in our midst is proposed, be made good when applied to old workers, in adding to it a payment of some sort when they are unemployed? . . ."

How the A. F. of L.'s proposal to establish a nation-wide system of employment exchanges can be established without some form of registration is not explained.

The report then goes on to ask other questions, saying by innuendo what it seems the committee did not care to state directly:

"Are we prepared now to admit defeat in our efforts to so increase the consuming power of the people that it will meet their productive capacity?

"Shall we say to our people that they have produced too much and therefore must accept too little?

"Are we to enter upon the policy of accepting momentary relief without regard to the future consequences?

"Shall we discard the system under which we move freely from one end of our great country to the other, crossing state lines, stopping where we please, leaving when we choose, living where we will, without ever undergoing the scrutiny of a government official or reporting to government officers?

"Have we lost courage to the point where we regard freedom no longer as the greatest essential of life, as the most necessary element in human progress?

"Shall we be content to carry industrial passports because they have a governmental label?

" . . . Shall we now say to our people that Europe, through unemployment insurance and similar legislative schemes has found a way of making life for the working people better over there than it is here, notwithstanding the fact that it is the working people of Europe who desire to come to America."

After attacking the application of the workmen's compensation principle to unemployment insurance, the report asks:

"Is it not true that unemployment

schemes of the sort advocated in the resolutions before the convention will tend to prevent the workers from joining the movement to increase and improve working conditions because of fears that they might thus sacrifice their eligibility to unemployment insurance?"

The committee admits that its members are opposed to unemployment insurance but is willing to accept the recommendation of the Executive Council to study unemployment relief measures. This leaves the door open for a reversal of policy.

It will be to the credit of three delegates that they rose on the floor of the convention and stated their opposition to the administration's policy. The roll of honor consists of Henry Ohl, Jr., of the Wisconsin State Federation of Labor, Slavens of Newport and Max Zaritsky, president of the Cloth Hat, Cap and Millinery Workers' International Union. The latter, particularly, in a masterly address retrieved the honor of progressive labor delegates to A. F. of L. conventions. He made a break in the policy pursued by those who, although they dissent from the majority A. F. of L. viewpoint, never take the floor to voice their opinions either because of fear or a sense of futility. He was greeted by a round of applause but the committee's report was adopted with only three or four voices in opposition.

### Positive Stand on 5-Day Week Postponed

The five-day week proposition came before the convention through a resolution submitted by James O'Connell of the Metal Trades Department. This resolution was brought in upon recommendation of the recent convention of the department which by unanimous vote had declared itself "in favor of a basic five-hour day" and asked that the American Federation of Labor in fiftieth annual convention make a similar declaration and "pledge itself to take necessary steps to bring about its operation and establishment at the earliest possible day." The committee on the shorter work-day approved the sentiments expressed in the resolution, pointing out that "while the shortening of the day may seem a radical change, it fails to parallel the drastic change that is taking place in industry which has so enormously increased per capita production." Nevertheless, the committee was not in favor of making a declaration in favor of the basic five-hour day at the present time and stated:

" . . . your committee recommends

that the resolution and the committee's report be referred to the executive council, with instructions to give the subject their immediate and thorough consideration; to secure all available statistical information related to the problem, and to present in its report to the next convention of the A. F. of L. their conclusions, and which will also contain a recommendation for the length of work day and work week, which the American trade union movement shall apply all its energies to establish."

### One Cent Tax Lost

Those who were looking to the convention for material assistance in organizing the Southern workers pinned their hopes on the resolution of the United Textile Workers asking for an increase in the per capita tax by one cent per member per month in order to create a defense fund. There seems to have been opposition in the committee on law to setting up a defense fund by means of an increase in the per capita, and Thomas McMahon, president of the United Textile Workers and a member of the committee handling the resolutions, asked the unanimous consent of the convention for the withdrawal of the resolution and the substitution of another which would ask the Executive Council to work out a method by which a defense fund could be established. This required the unanimous consent of the delegates present and when James Feeley of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners objected, McMahon was unable to have his resolution introduced. The original resolution was later withdrawn in committee and the matter never came up for discussion on the convention floor. Instead a collection was taken up for the heroic strikers at Danville, Va. Two hundred dollars was contributed by a former trade unionist, now an employer, who was present, and eight hundred dollars by the delegates.

Several incidents at the convention are worthy of attention. The tiff between Daniel J. Tobin, President of the Teamsters' Union, on the one hand and President Green and Secretary Frank Morrison on the other over the arrangements for the convention has received some publicity. His censure of the administration for bring-

# WARNING!

## TO AMERICAN

**Economists**

**Business Leaders**

**Legislators**

**Social Workers**

**Workers**

**All Taxpayers!!!**

## MENACE OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE!

AVOID THE PLAGUE!  
SHALL WE PROFIT BY THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHER COUNTRIES?

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS  
11 West 42d Street, New York, N. Y.

This blast issued by the notorious aggregation, the National Association of Manufacturers, quotes among others as opponents of unemployment insurance, Herbert Hoover, John E. Edgerton, president of the National Association of Manufacturers, and William Green. What fine company to be in, Mr. Green!

ing the A. F. of L. convention to Boston at the same time as the riotous, boozing American Legionnaires who literally made it impossible for the Federation to do any business during most of the first week of sessions was received with sympathy by most of the delegates.

The limited viewpoint of most of the delegates was illustrated in a resolution introduced by the Hotel and Restaurant Employees' delegation attacking the Hotel Managers' Association of Cleveland for locking out its employees and introducing the "yellow dog" contract. The Hotel Statler is affiliated with this association. It was at this hotel that President Hoover had stopped on his way to the A. F. of L. convention and it was the Hotel Statler of Boston, under the same ownership as its namesake in Cleveland, where the A. F. of L. had its headquarters and conducted most of the convention sessions. It did not seem to occur to anybody that recognizing the Hotel Statler in Boston smacked of disloyalty to the locked out hotel workers of Cleveland. The question was referred to the Executive Council which was to exercise its good will in the affair.

The Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners under the presidency of that staunch Republican, William L. Hutcheson, again proved itself the "bad boy" of the A. F. of L. In a resolution presented by the Building Trades Department the Brotherhood was accused of defying the jurisdiction of other unions and permitting its Washington, D. C. local to cooperate with

a contractor to secure an injunction against the local Building Trades Council. The Executive Council of the A. F. of L. was asked to "compose the existing differences." The 3,032 votes of the Brotherhood give it immunity.

## "Friends of Labor"

Of the few interesting discussions at the convention one of them escaped the notice of the daily press. It occurred during the closing hours of the convention and was provoked by a harmless looking resolution introduced by N. P. Alifas of the Washington, D. C., Central Labor Union, and representative of the International Association of Machinists.

The resolution described the parliamentary situation in the House of Representatives which made it technically impossible to carry out the non-partisan political policy of the A. F. of L. of "rewarding the friends of labor and punishing its enemies." In the resolution and in the accompanying debate certain significant things became clear. It was shown that in the last two Congresses only one record vote has been taken on labor measures, that the leaders of the House of Representatives have conspired to prevent the taking of roll call votes in order to establish "party responsibility," that a great many of these leaders have the endorsement of the A. F. of L., that Congressmen have sabotaged labor legislation in committee and on the floor of the House but have been permitted by their party leaders to vote for certain bills in order to secure the approval of organized labor, and that Senator Simmons of North Carolina was on the list of "friends of labor" at the time of his support of Judge Parker for the United States Court bench. The discussion showed that even old time trade union leaders have no faith in the reliability of the non-partisan policy of the A. F. of L. but will swear by it anyway.

The "golden" convention of the American Federation of Labor showed that the A. F. of L. was reposing securely in the house of American capitalism, happy that it had become a welcome guest. Whether it can be aroused from its contentment depends upon the action of labor progressives.

# Significance of the A. F. of L.'s Fiftieth Convention



By  
**A. J. MUSTE**

**W**HAT is the significance for the Labor Movement of the recent fiftieth convention of the American Federation of Labor held in Boston? Our answer may be set forth under three heads.

1. *The Tie-Up of A. F. of L. Leadership With Hoover, the Republican Party and Big Business.* A visit of the President of the United States to an American Federation of Labor convention is not an annual occurrence. When it takes place, it is apt to be significant. Woodrow Wilson visited an A. F. of L. convention in 1917 to signify the enlistment of the organized Labor Movement in the war to make the world safe for democracy. Herbert Hoover visited the A. F. of L. convention thirteen years later in 1930 to signify the enlistment of the present leadership of the A. F. of L. in the struggle to keep America safe for plutocracy. Coming so soon after Hoover's fight to the last ditch to put Judge Parker of yellow-dog contract fame on the Supreme Court bench, the invitation to Hoover to address an A. F. of L. convention can only be interpreted as a sign to Mr. Hoover and the world that the present leaders of organized labor in this land are no longer capable of any real resentment even over a matter so vital to pure and simple unionism as the yellow-dog contract!

Terence Powderly, ill-fated leader of the Knights of Labor, once wrote in the days when that organization was going to pieces under his hands: "If I could only properly resent a thing!" That epitaph may yet be written over the A. F. of L. or at least over its present leaders.

As has been pointed out in LABOR AGE, the A. F. of L., never revolutionary, was yet in the Gompers era generally allied with the liberal, democratic, "opposition" elements in the nation. That is no longer true. It stands with big business as against little business. In the failure to endorse Al Smith, great "friend of labor," in the policies pursued during the depression, in the failure to oppose the nomination of Chief Justice Hughes, in the tariff lobby, in the matter of military preparedness and nearly everywhere else the A. F. of L. lines up with the Republican status quo.

Of course, the course of true love does not run perfectly smoothly. Mr. Hoover's personal appearance at the Boston convention was a horrendous "flop" according to all who attended the event. He was in poor voice, obviously tired, and the amplifier did not work well. After all, the majority of the delegates at an A. F. of L. convention are still Democratic politicians, and they cannot yet warm up to a Republican leader as readily as President Green, or Brother Woll, or Hutcheson of the Carpenters, or Lewis of the Miners. There was a good deal of sniping during the convention at certain specific policies of the Hoover administration, such as cutting down forces in post offices or navy yards.

## An Entente Cordiale

For all that, the alliance between labor and the status quo is firm on all important points. President Green repeated his laudation of Hoover for his fine handling of the depression, especially for preventing wage reductions, in face of the fact that such an agency as the Standard Statistics Co. estimates a reduction of nearly nine billion (\$9,000,000,000) dollars in the purchasing power of American wage earners. Support was given to the invincible optimism upon which the Hoover administration insists: "Now that we are emerging from the depression," quoth President Green! In its unemployment program, the A. F. of L. does not stray away from Mr. Hoover's, and equally with him refrains from advocating compulsory unemployment insurance.

It will be well for Socialists and other radicals to bear in mind that this President with whom the A. F. of L. officialdom finds itself so easily and completely in accord went from Boston with the A. F. of L. benediction upon him to make his King's Mountain speech in which he hashed up stale eighteenth century arguments against Socialism and took great pains to speak of it in the same breath with Communism so that the public would associate the two in its mind on the eve of election!

2. *The Attitude Toward Organizing the Unorganized.* Since the A. F. of L. concentrates attention almost ex-

clusively on organizing workers on the economic field, it may most fairly be judged on its success and its spirit in this field. What, then, do the records of the recent convention tell about organizational activities and accomplishments?

First, there has probably been no increase in trade union membership, despite the fact that the Executive Council's report on the face of it shows an increase of about 27,000 paying per capita over last year. This report, however, credits the United Mine Workers still with 400,000 members whereas that organization's own reports show only about 100,000 paying dues to it. By itself the fact that there has been no increase in membership during a depression year would not be serious. This is, however, the eighth year showing virtually no increase. Furthermore, not a single gain is to be seen in any of the big unorganized basic industries. In the great steel industry membership is down below eight thousand.

Secondly, there was less show of aggressiveness about organization in important industries than ever before. At the Detroit convention a few years ago there was much ado about organizing the auto industry. A year or so later there were high resolves about the aviation workers. This year none of these industries got specific attention. The Executive Council's report contained a pious phrase about the difficulty of "organizing mass production industries" and the consequent need of a survey after which the Executive Council should be authorized "to form an organizing committee, etc."

It is significant, too, that although at several recent conventions declarations were made to the effect that the Labor Movement must adapt union structure to the new type of industrial structure, waive craft jurisdiction, etc., no reference is made this year to that delicate subject. Can it be that the movement for trustification and rationalization has slowed up so that there is less need of industrial unionism than two years ago?

At the New Orleans convention in 1928 the slogan "Double the Membership" was adopted. At Toronto in 1929 the slogan was re-affirmed. At

Boston in 1930 all mention of the slogan was discreetly omitted. Undoubtedly, the will to organize in new fields grows weaker and weaker.

Thus we are prepared for the hideous failure of this convention to handle the Southern organizing campaign problem effectively. There is to be no permanent defense fund to help unions in organizing drives and strikes. The United Textile Workers introduced a resolution to double the per capita tax paid to the A. F. of L., that is, to make it two cents per member per month instead of one cent, the extra cent to go into a defense fund, which at that rate would amount to something under \$300,000 per year. In the Committee on Law terrific pressure was brought to bear on the harassed textile union officials to withdraw this revolutionary measure, and they did withdraw it, having on their hands a critical strike in Danville, Va., for financing of which they depend on the good will of other A. F. of L. unions. Permission to introduce a substitute asking the Executive Council to devise ways to create a defense fund was refused, the Carpenters objecting to unanimous consent!

This is not the time to discuss at length the bearing of all this on the Danville strike and the whole Southern organizing campaign. Refusal to create a permanent defense fund does not, it is true, necessarily imply that adequate funds will not be forthcoming for Danville, where in all probability the question whether the U. T. W. can do anything in the South in this generation will be decided. However, the most optimistic can hardly argue that the convention's attitude was completely satisfactory. Even in the face of the depression, A. F. of L. unions will have to come across with tremendous contributions for Danville, or it will be impossible for any one to retain a spark of belief in their desire to see workers organized.

3. *Unemployment Insurance.* With many of the A. F. of L. proposals for dealing with unemployment all are, of course, in hearty accord. Doubtless, the discussion of them at the convention with the resultant publicity has contributed to stimulate certain activities now under way throughout the land. It was a major error, however, for the convention to fail to go on record for a nation-wide governmental system of unemployment insurance or compensation.

Some attempt to care for the victims of unemployment must be made. If it is not to be a thorough, universal, scientific plan such as C. P. L. A.

proposes, there are just three possible alternatives. Workers may be exhorted to save individually against unemployment; or the private insurance companies may enter the field; or the corporations may undertake unemployment insurance as part of their welfare schemes.

### Bad Economics

As for the first, the individuals who most need to save will be least able to do so. It is bad economics and bad social policy to ask the poorest groups in the population to cut down their consumption, when under-consumption is precisely what we suffer from. It is ridiculous to ask individuals to make provision for a social risk for which they are not responsible.

As for the second, the private insurance companies are not now permitted by law, except in the one state of Michigan, to write unemployment insurance. They would charge up against the insured the cost of selling insurance and a handsome profit to help extend their flourishing racket, to mention no other considerations against this proposal, which bankers and employers throw out not with any

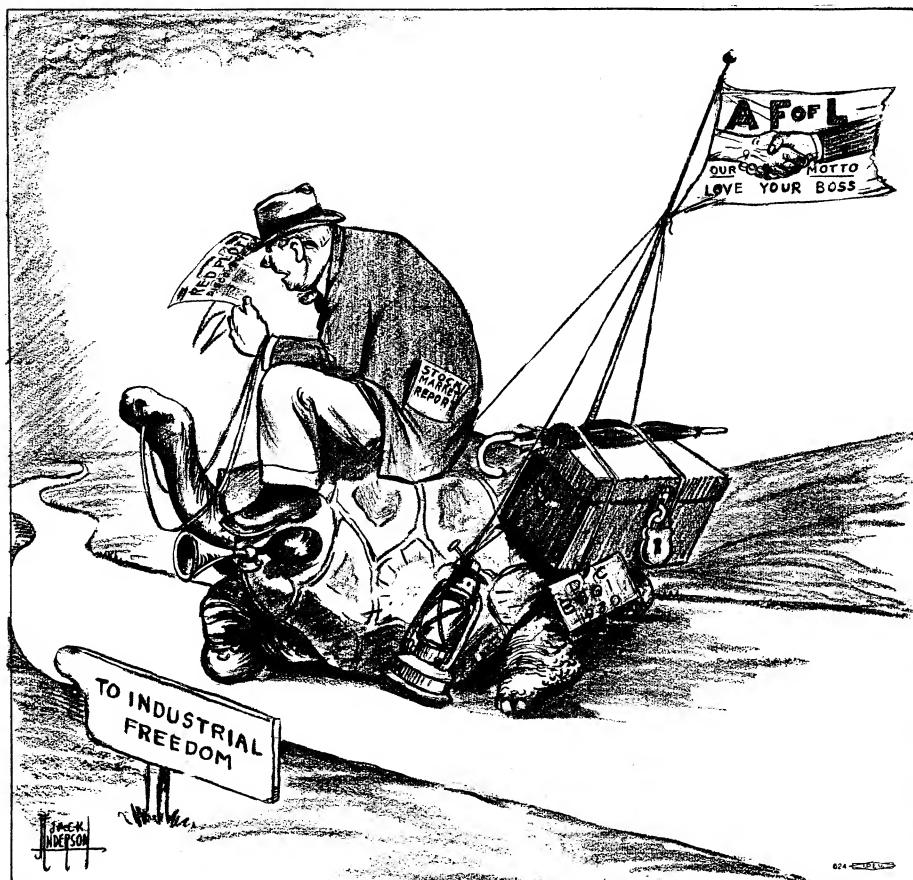
serious idea that it will be adopted, but to distract attention and energy from the movement for governmental insurance.

The third alternative has a good chance of being adopted by a number of corporations—has already in fact been adopted by a few, notably and significantly, the General Electric. But that means providing inadequately for only a small percentage of the workers. They will be tied up to the company and made immune to unionism, as by other welfare schemes; and so by its opposition to compulsory insurance the A. F. of L. leadership plays squarely into the hands of company unionists and open shoppers. It is lined up against even such pink liberals as Franklin Roosevelt and such cautious economists as John R. Commons; and it is lined up with such staunch "friends of labor" as John E. Edgerton of the National Manufacturers Association and Ralph Easley of the National Civic Federation.

Unquestionably, however, the A. F. of L. leadership has on this issue got itself in a tight place. On this issue progressive laborites will be able as

(Continued on Page 29)

### TRAVELING IN LOW GEAR



Drawn for Labor Age by Jack Anderson

# Political Impotence of Massachusetts Labor

*By*  
ALFRED BAKER LEWIS

THE appointment by President Green of a special agent to investigate charges of corruption among labor leaders in Massachusetts in the recent primary campaign in this State, and a half-hearted white-wash by that agent, is only one of a long series of events showing the political impotence of the Massachusetts Labor Movement as the result of its allegedly non-partisan political policy.

I think I was most struck by labor's utter helplessness politically when I attended the hearing on the very mild anti-injunction bill that they had introduced in the state legislature two years ago. The President of the Massachusetts Federation of Labor stated at the hearing that organized labor was intensely interested in the passage of the bill and watches closely the votes of the legislators upon the matter. An unfriendly legislator asked him, "Does that mean a threat, Mr. Cabral?" As the poor president had no labor party, nor even any political unity of organized labor behind either of the two major parties backing him to make any threat on the political life of labor's enemies, he was forced to say, "Oh no, that's not a threat."

This year, the state convention of the Massachusetts Federation of Labor was faced with the same serious unemployment situation that faces the whole country. For the past several years, the Socialists among the trade unions have been urging part pay for the unemployed through a system of unemployment insurance as a means of relief for the jobless. The Socialist Party has drawn up and introduced a bill along these lines in the state legislature, and has secured the endorsement of it by a number of individual unions and a few Central Labor Unions, together with a sort of half way endorsement from the Boston Central Labor union in giving us a credential to visit their affiliated unions and to talk in favor of the plan. But the urgent desire of the politicians among the delegates to the convention to make the wet issue the dominant plank in labor's demands triumphed to such an extent that unemployment insurance was lost in the

shuffle and now anyone who is wet can claim to have a record "favorable to labor," as the A. F. of L. in this state interprets it.

Massachusetts elects a Senator this year, and the leading candidates among the Republicans were William M. Butler, a New Bedford mill owner, and Eben Draper, another mill owner. Among the Democrats there were a number of undistinguished candidates of whom the richest was Marcus Coolidge, a retired manufacturer, who has since obtained the nomination.

William M. Butler was one of the leaders of the New Bedford textile manufacturers in their attempt to put over the 10 per cent wage cut in 1928, and has been for many years a high official of the Arkwright Club, the association of textile manufacturers who have been trying to destroy the 48-hour law for women in industry which now prevails in Massachusetts.

He was spending large sums to obtain the nomination and did not fail to include many leaders of organized labor in distributing his campaign funds. A report on the records of the various candidates appeared at the convention of the Massachusetts Federation of Labor, stating that Mr. Butler had a record favorable to organized labor when he was in the state legislature in the eighteen nineties! As Mr. Butler is a dry and organized labor in this state is very wet, this proved too much, however, and a resolution embodying his anti-labor record for the past several years was adopted.

Then Mr. Butler came out with a program for a national 48-hour law to even up the textile legislation between the North and South and thus help the textile industry in the Northern states. Mr. Butler has been in the Senate before, not elected but appointed there by Calvin Coolidge, and while there he had done nothing for a 48-hour law. Nor is his party doing anything now for such a law. And of course such a law would be declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Butler does not favor abolishing the power of the Supreme Court to throw out the laws duly passed by Congress and signed by the President.

Yet on the very slim ground that Mr. Butler had made an obviously ineffective and probably insincere declaration in favor of a national 48-hour law, he at once received the endorsement of a large group of labor men in New Bedford who were fighting his wage cut tooth and nail only two years ago! Among the men who endorsed him was Mr. Batty, head of the New Bedford Textile Council, and Mr. Sanderson, President of the New Bedford Central Labor Union. A number of other labor men joined in this endorsement, including a Vice-President of the State Federation of Labor from Springfield. Mr. Butler has since received the Republican nomination.

Of the various candidates for major offices among the Democrats and Republicans, the state federation of labor endorsed specifically no one, although they said of some of the Democrats that their record was "favorable to organized labor." The net effect of the report of the State Federation of Labor is that labor leaders can be on the payroll of almost any candidate without going contrary to the stand taken by the Federation.

An interesting sidelight on the application of their non-partisan political policy was evidenced in the primary fight for the Republican nomination for Congress in the upper end of Essex County, where A. Platt Andrews, the present incumbent, an undistinguished machine Republican who has declared himself recently as a wet, was opposed by Mrs. Brookings, a dry. Mrs. Brookings has been a member of the state legislature. She voted for a real old age pension bill and has opposed the various attempts of her fellow Republican, Mr. Butler and his Arkwright Club, to break down the 48 hour law for women in industry. Organized labor refused to endorse her and endorsed Andrews, not because of her reactionary stand against free speech, but because she was a dry and her opponent favored labor's wet demand.

Further comment upon the nonpartisan policy as it is applied in Massachusetts seems superfluous.

# Lying Against Labor

## Big Business Suppresses News Favorable to the Workers ~~✓~~ By EUGENE L. SCHOSBERG

**N**EWSPAPERS and magazines in America are owned and operated today by individuals, their estates or corporate groups which are closely bound up with the industrial, political and social interests of the wealthy. Through this connection journalism has become the business of presenting news and influencing thought on behalf of those who profit by privilege. It is being used to protect such privilege against any threat appearing in the social and economic order of which labor disputes are considered typical.

When the fortunes of public weal rest in the hands of such newspaper systems as are controlled by the Hearst, Munsey, Calkins and Capper groups their sense of social responsibility can only be second to the needs of oil, sugar and the traction interests. Papers belonging to estates depend for their profit on vast industrial holdings like the Pulitzer, Reid and Bennet estates that circulate in millions throughout every important city. The effect of such holdings upon the dissemination of news in industrial disputes is easily demonstrated by citing the part played by the SEATTLE TIMES owned by James J. Hill in smashing the strike of the workers of the Great Northern Railroad in which company the newspaper owners had invested \$170,000; or the case of the BOSTON TRANSCRIPT, which according to the statement of a former editor, serves the reactionary privileged classes and is guided by a family whose fortunes arose out of the exploitation of workers to an extent unusual even for such a crew. The Hearst owned SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER in suppressing the actors' strike of 1919 is another case in point.

### Bewildering the Layman

With such control over the news gathering and distributing agencies in the hands of labor's enemies the position of the workers in their attempt for advancement is most insecure. In our present economic state the status of Labor is unsettled and changing.

Not only as regards its functions and rights but also in the realm of popular opinion regarding its relative importance is there little certitude. As to its aims and aspirations the layman is altogether bewildered. Labor's attempt to advance is invariably accompanied by strikes, arbitrations, disputes, riots and conferences. To say that these events are of vital news value and that a proper presentation of them is the right of every individual who reads a newspaper is only to express once more a truism with regards to the functioning of democratic so-

not obvious, cash payments are used for control. The effect of this upon labor disputes can be guessed at. A few instances of these situations will serve to illustrate how the public's mind is warped with regards to the aims of Labor. The SAN FRANCISCO BULLETIN is on the monthly payroll of the Southern Pacific Railroad and its effect on checking the growth of labor unions in that industry is told in Fremont Older's book, "My Own Story." A Federal investigation revealed how the ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS, owned by the Colorado mine operators, prevented any true news of the desperate struggle between the strikers and the company-recruited-and-maintained militia from reaching the unsuspecting outside world. The subversive influence exercised on the revolting mill workers of Youngstown, Ohio, by the Du Pont interests will only be truly appreciated on ascertaining that all the foreign language newspapers read in that section are owned and published by the Du Ponds themselves without even the pretense of running under another name. These same interests are not above capitalizing the struggles of the workers to their own advantage as when the LOS ANGELES HERALD screamed forth the virtues of the closed shop and the TIMES advocated the open shop when both were under the identical ownership of Otis and his street railway company.

### Plutocracy's Paid Publicity

Wholesale publicity campaigns are often undertaken at vast expense in attempting to rally public opinion under the banner of its flagrant sins by industrial interests without scruples as to the false information they spread. Of these, the case of Ivy Lee, expensive publicity agent for the Rockefeller group, is most infamous. He distributed no less than 32 nation-wide bulletins in behalf of the Colorado mine owners during the strike telling how the owners were striving to retain the sacred right of the workers to make individual contracts as against collective bargaining.

It is at this point that we might consider the Associated Press and its relation to the reporting of labor news. By far most of the news printed in the hundreds of papers in this country is sent out by the far-flung correspondents of the Associated Press.

#### SLEIGHT OF MIND

The Anaconda Copper Mines owns or controls every large newspaper in the State (Montana). Half of these papers are boosting Senator Walsh and the other half are for Galen, Republican candidate for Senator and the present Associate Justice of the Supreme Court.

In Missoula the A. C. M. owns both papers but has but one editorial writer. During the morning he writes Walsh blah for the Democratic sheet, goes out to lunch and returns to the same desk to write Galen gems of thought for the other sheet. Pretty good, eh?—From a correspondent.

society. The duty of the newspaper in such cases, in view of its responsibility as a social power, is the prompt, unbiased, uncolored and unprejudiced presentation of all news. If the public press is not faithful to its duty in this respect it is of the deepest concern to everyone.

A late 19th century development in American industrial life that bore its vicious fruit was the retaining of newspapers by large business interests for the furtherance of their personal fortunes. No sizable industry is without its organ for propaganda and the control of popular opinion for its own benefit. Where outright ownership is

Many smaller papers maintain no reportorial staff but depend upon these dispatches for all news but that which is immediately local. The Associated Press is a tightly closed organization, the privileges and services of which are obtained through the purchase of a costly franchise. Admission to these chosen ranks is dependent solely upon the will of the 41 voting members. These voters represent in every instance the powerfully entrenched groups of newspapers already described. The function of the Associated Press is ostensibly the transmission to the member newspapers of all news. The relative importance, the interpretation and the power of news suppression rests solely with the representatives who are controlled by instructions from the central office.

### The Biased A. P.

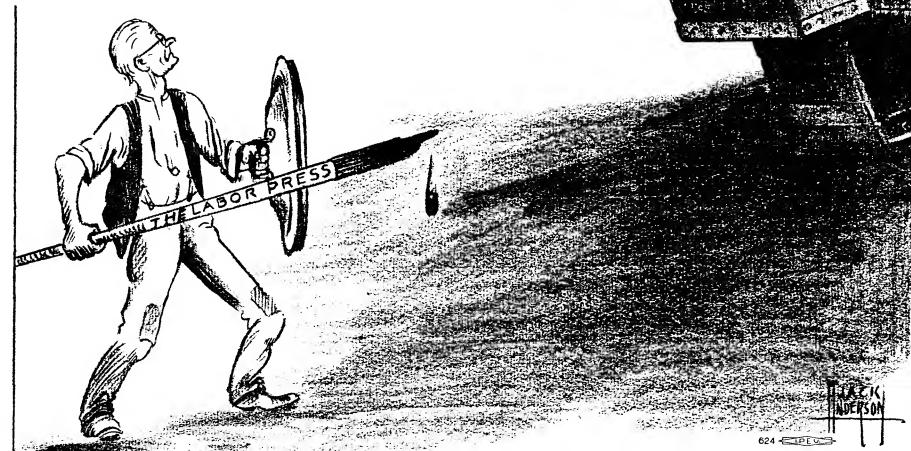
It is during labor disputes that the true nature of this news gathering agency is revealed. Although the representatives of the Associated Press are supposedly independent of any newspaper, an exposé after the Los Angeles street railway strike, the key situation to a forthcoming municipal election wherein a Socialist was the outstanding candidate, showed that the A. P. representative was a staff member of the reactionary *Los ANGELES TIMES*, the organ of the street railway interests. The poison that filtered through this representative was in no small way responsible for the loss of the strike, and incidentally the defeat of the Socialist candidate. In the trial of the union officials during the West Virginia coal strike of 1913 news of this conflict went out to an unsuspecting and credulous world through the supposedly impartial hands of the Provost-Marshal of the Militia, who also acted as the A. P. representative. The general attitude of the Associated Press toward radicals can be judged from an examination of the deliberately false news sent over the wires concerning Debs at the time of the Pullman strike, later privately repudiated by the A. P. itself but never publicly rectified. Again we come upon the fantastic fables broadcast about the alleged dynamite outrages committed by the embattled Lawrence textile workers. That news is deliberately suppressed on behalf of the employers was conclusively shown by Congressional investigation after the massacres in the Colorado miners' strike.

Samuel Untermyer, who fought the attempt of the A. P. to keep Hearst papers out of its association,

remarked at that time: "The monopoly of the A. P. over the news of the world is complete. The A. P. should become a public utility, until so its monopoly is intolerable. The clique that controls the A. P. is under the complete domination of the most narrow minded, reactionary group of capitalists in this country."

### Power of Advertisers

Any examination of present day American journalism shows conclusively that the influence of advertising cannot be exaggerated. The growth of newspaper advertising has been phenomenal. It is estimated that while 30 years ago one-third of a newspaper's revenue was through advertising, today it must be reckoned at from two-thirds to 90 per cent. That this element plays a great part in the attitude of the newspapers towards labor disputes may be judged from the fol-



Drawn for Labor Age by Jack Anderson

### LUDICROUS OPPPOSITION

lowing pertinent example: The liberal factions in Los Angeles attempted to free themselves from the opposition of the controlled local press and so launched the *MUNICIPAL NEWS*. In its columns all political and economic factions obtained the same amount of space, presented by leading journalists, in a fair light. Immediately the business interests of the city brought pressure to bear on the paper's advertisers. They were cajoled, browbeaten and blackmailed until they were forced to leave the paper. The *MUNICIPAL NEWS* died within a year.

The famous investigation by Upton Sinclair in the strike of the Chicago meat packers could not find a single newspaper to publish his findings. The editor of the *CHICAGO TRIBUNE* confessed that publication was impossible because of the hold the advertisers had on the paper. A clerks' strike in Stern's department store in New York

City never reached the public through a single daily paper.

Those newspapers who put up a fight against the machinations of big business for news suppression are eventually forced out of business. The *ATLANTIC MONTHLY* in a 1916 issue, relates how recalcitrant papers are forced to suspend publication unless they serve the interests of their advertisers. A New England newspaper had to shut down its presses because of financial pressure applied through the Shoe Machinery interests of Massachusetts. The *INDIANAPOLIS SUN* exposed the manipulations of the Indianapolis street railway system. It was boycotted by the Merchants and Manufacturers Association and eventually gave up its ghost, though its circulation had risen from 17,000 to 40,000 as a result of its campaign against the street railways.

Advertising dominates the policies of magazines as well as newspapers.

**November, 1930**

especially those whose circulation runs into the millions. These publications, just as in the newspaper field, are owned in groups and by powerful interests. They are controlled by syndicates such as the Hearst group with six, Munsey with three, the Butterick Publishing Company with seven, the Crowell organization with four and the Curtis with three. A realization of just what advertising means to these publications may be grasped from the fact that in one instance an 18 million dollar running expense and publication deficit was met with the profits of its advertising sales. Another magazine costs 32 cents to produce and sells for a nickel. Advertisers pay for the difference between cost and selling price and a handsome profit to boot. A single page of advertising in one publication costs \$6,000. Over three hundred millions of dollars is spent by business on magazine advertising!

### **Buying Up Critics**

Magazines make excellent vehicles for social investigation, for instigation of reforms and are means of catching the public interest. In fact, the circulation of all the leading magazines was brought to such amazing figures by attracting the public through social reform campaigns. The interests, seeing danger in such a force for social reform, bought out the magazines to use in their campaign of misinformation and control of public opinion in their own behalf. In 1910-11 the AMERICAN MAGAZINE devoted its issues to an expose of the conditions of labor, finance and politics in the Standard Oil Company, the Beef Trust and in Mexican affairs. These investigations were abruptly halted when in 1919 the magazine was bought by the Crowell system owned by Thomas W. Lamont. Its editorial writers were such figures as John S. Phillips, Ray Stannard Baker and Ida Tarbell. They resigned immediately. The AMERICAN MAGAZINE now devotes itself to the publication of "success" stories. The sad tale is repeated in the fortune of COLLIER'S. It also was gobbled up by the Crowell system and was lost to good causes forever. It was the corporation controlled COLLIER'S that bought the expose of the meat packing industry, paid for the articles and never published a line. EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE which did publish this series of articles and as a result saw its circulation jump by a half-million readers, was subsequently bought by the Butterick Publishing Company and today devotes itself to the subject of

### **FOR YOUR ATTENTION!**

Another Notable C. P. L. A. Eastern Regional Conference on

### **"Labor in the New Industrial Era (of Hard Times)"**

will be held on

**Saturday and Sunday, December 6 and 7, 1930**

at the LABOR TEMPLE, 14th St. and 2nd Ave., N. Y. C.

*Subjects for Discussion—*

PRACTICAL DILEMMAS FACING MILITANT UNIONS  
THE NEGRO PROBLEM INTERNATIONAL DEPRESSION  
AS WOMEN LOOK AT INDUSTRY  
POSITIVE ACTION FOR THE NEW ECONOMIC ERA

(See Page 21 in this Issue for details)

dress patterns. Once the liberal McCLURE'S magazine ruined itself financially championing the public's interest. Now it belongs to the banking interests. It devoted its entire 1919 editions to the villification of the Soviet regime.

To return once more to the attitude of the press regarding labor news, or news pertaining to the general public welfare as opposed to the desires of private buccaneers, it might be well to devote some space to their inner organizations. Since 1914 Labor activities have assumed large enough significance to cause many of the largest dailies to include the position of Labor Editor on their staffs. But during an interview with one of these editors the confession was made that labor disputes remained in most instances the proper field of the police reporter. Labor news from distant points is sent by wire curtly reported and of sterile consequence. Even that little is subject to the censorship of the editor, the interpretation of the rewrite man and to the directions of the make-up man. The most striking attitude expressed, typical of the maltreatment of such news, was voiced by one newspaper man, "no labor dispute can possibly have any political significance and every effort on our part is made to keep out the element of class distinction and class differentiation."

### **"News Fit to Print"**

The editorial policy which controls the news columns is dictated by the publisher with close regard to his industrial holdings, political ambitions and social prejudices. Although one labor editor proudly asserted that never in his career had he been called upon to suppress any labor news, he did admit that on one occasion a strike of telegraphers working for a nationally known and powerful broker's house was kept from the paper, "in the interests of harmony." And this

from the paper that boasts the legend: "All the News That's Fit to Print." It is admitted that Manufacturers' Associations are constantly sending in unsolicited matter for publication relative to their labor problems, all of which bears investigation and much of which does not stand the test of veracity. The American Federation of Labor, on general information material and where no strike is involved, fares fairly well in the matter of publicity but whether this is not a sign of conservatism on the part of that organization rather than a liberal attitude on the part of the press is a moot question. The radical unions and all left wing groups are hopelessly suppressed in the columns of the public press, a condition that is frankly admitted by every labor writer who was approached. Even some of the newspapermen themselves unconsciously assume the attitude of their employers. "Most labor disputes are merely for the purpose of hell-raising rather than for any constructive end, anyway," one of them remarked.

Thus Labor has very little chance of having its story truly told by the present intricately developed business enterprise known as the publishing industry. Yet among the many elements credited with bringing civilization to its present place, communication takes major rank. The ability to bring all the people news of events and ideas has worked a tremendous influence upon the manner in which we live and think. Upon the accent given the news rests the impressions that guide a nation's life. By the rigid censorship imposed upon our news sources in favor of private gain disastrous consequences may result, not only to the immediate labor cause but to the ultimate well-being of the nation. The only alternative is a widespread labor press strong enough to counteract the evil influences of class controlled communication. But that is another story.

# Flashes From The Labor World

As usual the railroad trades take the lead where the American Federation of Labor prefers to "study" in the matter of the shorter work day. President A. F. Whitney of the Railroad Trainmen, one of the outstanding labor leaders of the times and apparently no disciple of his predecessor, William G. Lee, has been talking the 6-hour day for years and finally he has persuaded the other Brotherhood officials not only to indorse the plan but to call a meeting in Chicago Nov. 12 to plan a campaign.

Among the relevant facts which the advertiser-controlled press declines to give you in its true light is the discharge of more than 200,000 railroad workers in the past 12 months. This information you may find tucked away in a squib on the bottom of the financial page. But it is at least as important as the fact that another profiteer sees astounding prosperity just around the corner even though not so profitable to newspapers. These sheets are wholly concerned about restoring "confidence" so that workers may end their "buyers' strike" and scatter their shekels to advertisers. The bad news about the railroad men therefore is hardly news at all.

A definite campaign is to be launched for the 6-hour day by the rail Brotherhoods. Already the movement has made promising start among rank and filers, particularly around the Twin Cities where a railroad council has been bruiting the 6-hour day for a year. These railroad councils are central labor councils of the rail unions although not recognized by the Brotherhoods. The isolation of railroad men from the organized Labor Movement because the four big Brotherhoods are not in the A. F. of L. has been a crippling factor in preventing labor solidarity in big rail centers such as Chicago and the Twin Cities.

\* \* \*

Although every once in a while some prophet of industrialism foresees the 4-hour day it takes a lot of nerve for a labor leader even to talk about the 5-hour day. At Boston, President O'Connell of the A. F. of L. metal trades department had to explain he was an ultra-conservative before he could proceed to plead for the 5-hour day, which he conceded to be revolutionary. But neither Matthew Woll nor the timid progressives on the executive council who apparently have not the courage to debate

him could agree that labor should enunciate a doctrine so startling and challenging. That presumably will be left to some Ford or Edison, after which the A. F. of L. will meekly follow in his footsteps, as the A. F. of L. at Detroit followed Ford's declaration for the 5-day week.

\* \* \*

This Cleveland hotel lockout, it seems, is more than a merely local fight. According to President Flore and Secretary Hesketh of the culinary alliance, it is a prelude to a national attack on organized hotel workers. Back of the lockout of the Cleveland hotel workers July 14 was the Associated Industries, lately known under the malodorous name of American Plan Association. And behind that outfit are the big anti-union steel products companies of Cleveland, hand in hand with the Van Sweringens, speculators in railroads and real estate, and the idols of Cleveland babbity. There's money "in them thar" pockets, and it makes one shudder to think of the locked out cooks, waiters, waitresses and room workers walking the picket line in wintry weather to oppose this plunderbund. Nevertheless the Cleveland unionists have spunk, their international is keeping them going, and the firemen, engineers and musicians have walked out in support. It's a good fight and one well worth watching.

\* \* \*

American living standards must come down! This is the ukase of Wall Street, which is engaged in shaking the comfort out of workers' lives. The ANNALIST, financial weekly published by the NEW YORK TIMES company, puts it bluntly in these words: "The next period of sound prosperity will mean a lower standard of living in terms of material goods than that which was mistakenly presented last year as the normal American standard." And to illustrate, the ANNALIST says the \$1,400 laborer was being made to purchase \$2,000 worth of goods through instalment purchases. Back to poverty, cry the financial sheets while Hoover moons over his alleged war to end poverty. Back the bankers any time against the politicians!

\* \* \*

American workers will sacrifice six to ten billions of their share in the \$90,000,000,000 national income by the end of this depression, it is estimated. And when "sound prosperity" returns they'll have to get along with fewer flivvers

and radios, cheaper cuts of meat and fewer frills. Not so much high school education for their kids, not so much recreation for themselves. Such are the rewards of capitalism in the best of all possible profit-seeking worlds. It should be noted in passing, though, that the distress of workers is not reflected in the ranks of the profit-takers. Interest and dividends in 1930 will surpass those of 1929 and will constitute an all-time record. Record starvation for the workers and record profits for the owners! Fruits of rugged individualism!

\* \* \*

The apparently powerful building trades unions stand nearer the brink than we like to believe. That was apparent in their Boston convention when their officials admitted that jurisdictional wars were threatening their very existence, and yet no one union will budge an inch in its claims. The center of this jam seems to be the Carpenters' Brotherhood, whose officials with unparalleled shortsightedness and ignorance, refuse to recognize any authority in the Labor Movement and defy the A. F. of L. to touch the jurisdictional questions affecting them. Just what another determined assault on the unions, a la Landis, would result in now may well be imagined. Where broad-visioned leadership could have led the way out and united the builders in one centralized group, the Hutcheson type of leadership threatens to draw the building trades over the brink into disaster.

\* \* \*

Craftsmanship reaches fine flower in the stone industry, an important though small branch of the national economy. No fewer than five internationals occupy this small field, and jurisdictional quarrels are many. Fortunately none is so strong in the A. F. of L. that it can forbid Federation action on these squabbles. The unions are the granite cutters, paving cutters, marble cutters, stone cutters and quarry workers. Their workplaces are usually far from population centers, union administration is expensive and every one loses by the division.

\* \* \*

Workers should peel a sharp eye whenever this Hoover person says anything concerning them. He is now posing as the savior of the job crisis, although tardy in his appearance by about 12 months. His latest proposal is that all workers lucky enough to have full-time jobs now be cut to three or four

November, 1930

days a week, to give the unemployed a chance. The result of that is to accustom all workers to a lower standard of living so that when the much-heralded return of normalcy occurs, the wage level will be materially lower than now. If you don't believe LABOR AGE, read this item again, November 10, 1931.

\* \* \*

Said the president of an international union at the Boston convention of the A. F. of L.: "The president was here, the cardinal, the governor, the senator, the mayor—everybody was with us, except the workers." This man was saddened by what he termed the "corruption" of American workers' minds and desires during the Coolidge era. "We abuse the leaders," he said, "and probably they deserve a good bit of abuse. But how about the workers themselves? I myself have stood in my postoffice and seen union man after union man throw our union paper into the wastebasket with an oath, never even bothering to

open it. And it's a good little paper, too, even if I do say it myself."

"We hold meetings and only a baker's dozen show up. We appeal to members to pay dues, and they think up every possible ridiculous excuse to evade their responsibility. And our union is a pretty good one, as unions go, with 100 per cent job control over its industry."

"There is no intelligent group interest left in American workers, no desire to see beyond their noses, no inclination to study business control of this nation and ways to build up labor's strength. Yes, the leaders may be pretty bad, but I'll say that the majority of delegates at this convention are far more militant, progressive and honest than the rank and file."

\* \* \*

One reflection of this apathy is the growing prevalence of the checkoff. Not only in John L. Lewis's miners' union but in needle trades, building trades and other crafts new agreements are providing

that the employers shall deduct union dues and transmit them to the union. Is this the fruit of employer-union co-operation, which has shattered the idea of class consciousness? Where is the blame, on the union leaders, the rank and file, or the Midas touch of America that has corrupted politics, government, industry, unions, workers—everything?

\* \* \*

Co-operators, meeting in annual national convention in Superior late in October, decided to launch an insurance department within the Co-operative League of America to offer life, accident and casualty protection to co-ops and their members throughout the country. Two established cooperative insurance companies were named as official representatives of the league. A permanent inter-wholesale committee was named to keep the various sectional wholesale co-ops in touch with each other and a similar board was named for the flourishing oil co-ops.

For the first time in its history, the league is now entirely supported financially by its members and delegates of the 129 societies promised a 50 per cent boost for 1931.

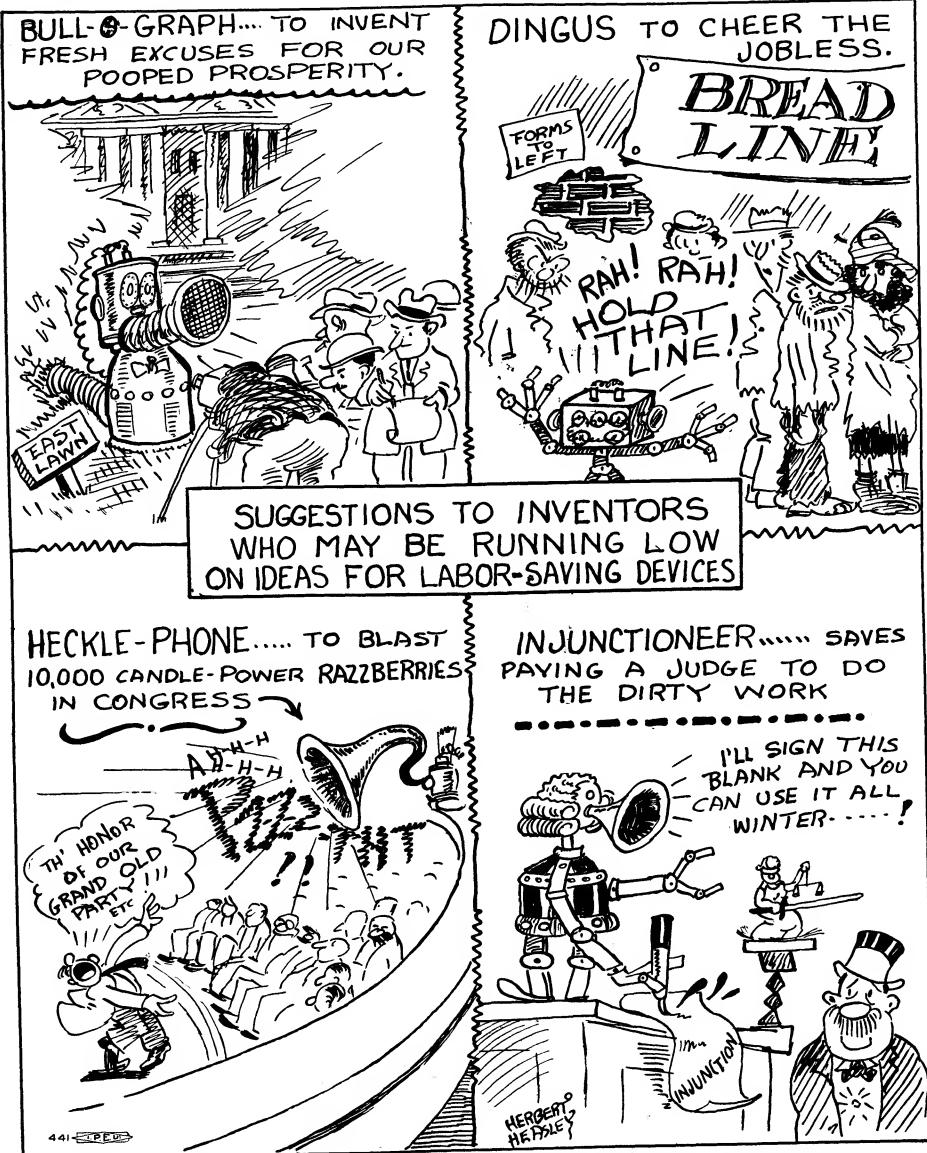
\* \* \*

In Durham, N. C., second largest tobacco manufacturing city in the world, the county officials are relieving the unemployment situation by decorating the courthouse with convict labor, while hundreds of union building trades mechanics are leaving the city to work elsewhere and still more are walking the streets. The officials are not even satisfied with the ordinary 10-hour day of the southland but are working the prisoners all day Saturdays too.

\* \* \*

Readers of LABOR AGE should bear in mind that 1930 is to be the biggest year ever for stock and bond owners. While 6,000,000 (take your choice) workers are jobless, and at least 15,000,000 workers and farmers and their dependents are destitute, dividend payments for the first nine months of 1930 were \$2,944,000,000 against \$2,501,000,000 in the same period of 1929. Dividend payments this year are \$3,200,000,000 up to October, against \$3,009,000,000 for the same period last year. Since 1920 the owners of industry have taken out \$14,820,000,000 in dividends and \$30,288,000,000 in interest for their services. This of course is not the record of profits—that is probably double the interest and dividend payments for the period. Enormous sums have been set aside in reserves, others reinvested in gobbling up competitors.

HARVEY O'CONNOR.



Drawn for Labor Age by Herbert Heasley

# The March of the Machine

## Reviewing the Historical Theory of Mechanization



By JUSTUS EBERT

**M**ACHINE Displacement Will Continue; Labor Is Entering New Industrial Era," thus a headline over the A. F. of L. Executive Council's report to the Boston convention.

This recalls some contrary contentions. According to the latter there is no fear of a permanent displacement of labor, or of continuously increased unemployment. History, so runs the argument substantially, shows the machine to have been a good thing for labor. It has created new industries and markets, with a consequent demand for labor. And, since history repeats itself, the history of the machine age of the future will be one of similar repetitions for the workers. Thus, everything will be lovely in the long run and "the new industrial era" will be essentially the old one all over again.

This contention seems plausible. It looks convincing, nay, conclusive. However, there are some questions arising in connection therewith. Here we are at the apex of the machine age, when, according to this theory, there ought to be a shortage of labor, greatly surpassing that following the Black Plague of England, because of the world-wide character of machine introduction. But what do we find instead? Alas for the workers, what we actually see are armies of unemployed so impoverished as to compel stagnation and make expanding markets impossible.

Of course it may be argued that this is not a fair conclusion as these are abnormal times in which no real test can, consequently, be made. But, as machinery is a contributing factor to this abnormality, there is no doubt the conclusion is a sound one.

Evidently, the machine-history theory, like all other theories, is not a fixed one. Like all other theories, it is subject to underlying changes. Undoubtedly, it has reached a stage of economic development that renders it, in its original phase, unsound and untenable. It is, accordingly, like many

other theories, in a process of modification, if not complete reversal.

For analogy, take the historical view of immigration. In this country immigration was originally based on free land and the population absorption made possible by it. This view is not completely revolutionized. Thanks to present day ownership and job competition, land and employment in this country are held to be practically all preempted. As a consequence, restriction of immigration is now the rule.

So also with the historical theory of machinery and employment. At the beginning of the machine age the inauguration of mechanized industry had a wide open field, as in Russia today, for instance. There was a demand for labor, as a subsequent result. But now such industry is not only fully developed, but is largely overdeveloped and what is of far greater significance, by way of contrast with past ages, its future development is not a matter of labor power but of machinery instead. That is, it increases a demand not for workers but for newer and better machines. This is, as already indicated, a stupendous difference.

The result is that we have reached a stage, as in land development, where machine-displaced laborers became increasingly difficult of absorption and where the one-time new industries, like coal, textiles, autos, transportation, etc., tend to reverse themselves, so that instead of being labor absorbers they are now labor displacers, thanks as also in the case of the movies and the musicians, to ever new mechanisms. Further, with this reversal goes a lowering of purchasing power just at a time when it should be increased instead. This only enhances the difficulties of employment in the machine age.

Obviously, with the basic changes now going on, there is no saving inflexibility to which the advocates of the historical machine theory can cling.

All of the foregoing takes no account of the many boys and girls of age clamoring for gainful employment every year — seven millions of them

every decade according to the A. F. of L. executive's report. Nor does it consider the rapid pace of modern industrialization, a pace that can only tend to cut down employment rather than enhance its prospects. Russia has already been referred to. Think of what it is attempting to do, in this respect, in five years. Why, it is trying to do in that brief period that which Great Britain and the United States required more than five generations to achieve, namely, the present superb mechanical development of industry. What implications for steady future employment does such speedy adaptation and assimilation contain for workers generally? Do not the achievements of Russia indicate that the mechanization of the future will not only mean an abridgement of employment, but also of opportunities for the workers?

Then again note the rationalization of European industry. Here again we observe new mechanization on a scale that will not admit of any other conclusion than the inevitability of mass unemployment of a permanent nature, especially when taken into consideration with its probable effects on competition for world-markets. In the latter scramble, the victory will go to the highest mechanized nation; the defeats to all others.

There we meet with another phase of machine development that puts more holes (as many as in a sieve) in the historical view; namely, the machine's world-wide character. When before, in history, have not only all industries, but practically all nations, been intent on mechanical innovations? When before, in history, has the desideratum of "a workerless industry" been so widely and so extensively in evidence as in present day capitalism? With machinery displacing workers everywhere in all industries, there is no doubt that "Machine Displacements Will Continue" and "Labor Is Entering New Industrial Era."

Is there no hope for the workers then? Not under present-day capitalism. Only social ownership of the machine—of industry the world over—will help. To fit the jobs to the workers and not the workers to the jobs, will be the social solution of the machine and unemployment. Dependence on an outmoded theory will prove of no avail.

# Following The Fight

By LOUIS FRANCIS BUDENZ

## Basic Industries Are Basic

**W**E observe that in Germany 140,000 metal workers vote for strike. Three million of their fellow-workers are out of work. Might these unemployed, jealous-eyed, not take the vacant jobs? Financial wreckage of this sort and that is all around. And yet, these metal workers threaten strike, and mean it.

A. F. of L.'s Metal Trades Department recommends the 5-hour day and the 5-day week. It does not get its way at this convention. Maybe later. But it has no power to enforce such demands on a wide scale. It cannot call out 140,000 men, nor perhaps one-tenth of that number, to make the resolution real. It could not tie up one large unit, not alone the many powerful chains that must be paralyzed to make the 5-hour day live in the metal industry.

Germany's workers may have much cause to become sick with disgust and despair; instead, they show fight. Their metal unions have some power. They represent something because they are organized to be something. There are few craft divisions to hamper them. Under the industrial union banner they can work and stop work as one man.

We have still to learn the lesson in the U. S. A. that the basic industries are basic. Without them, in this year 1930, Organized Labor cannot hope for any determining position in the labor market. The lead on wages and hours will invariably be dictated by the employing interests, which, analysis will show, is what is taking place today.

Those who talk of a labor party are largely baying at the moon, likewise, until they can join in making the American worker industrially conscious in the large, "heavy" industries. We do not say that baying at the moon is without its virtues. A voice in the dark political and economic night, crying without apparent avail, may reach a few willing ears eventually. But there will be no vital independent political action as long as the mass of the basic-industry workers are not made aware of their need for industrial solidarity.

It is an astounding thing that there has not been more clamor, in the ranks of Labor and among the friends of Labor, for extensive organization of the unorganized. All the fair dreams of the Liberals hang upon that initial step. All the alleged "nightmares" of the radicals depend upon it. As one who believes in "nightmares," I can see a probable reason for this. We have become newspaper-conscious, and a newspaper cannot spring a story until it is "news." The grievances of workers are hidden away, concealed, until they blare forth in strike. Action is the secret of the news business from the shooting of "Legs" Diamond to the innocuous address of Hoover at King's Mountain. (The inaction of a President is always taken for action!) Even those who view the capitalist press cynically are moved to sympathy for the workers only when that press reports action in this or that strike situation. The long, dangerous road that leads to organization and to show-down is hidden and forgotten.

Whatever the why of it, the basic-industry workers are not regarded with the concern that they should be looked upon. The oil tanks of Bayonne line the sky forbiddingly, with scarcely a thought being given to them from the out-

side. The 25,000 unorganized textile workers of Paterson go to and fro without a semblance of revolt being brought to them. The huge steel furnaces of Youngstown or Bethlehem or Pittsburg light the night with a red glare of defiance and assurance. So on and on and on.

A tremendous shaking up of American industrial life is long overdue. For that, some attempt at workers' control of the basic industries is vital. When is the hour to start on this undertaking if it be not now?

## DEPRESSION AND REVOLT

**M**ISINGIVINGS may appear seemly as to the possibility of organization work in this period of depression. Take those unorganized textile dyers in the city of Paterson, N. J. Are they not working mainly at rush periods and then laid off? Do they not often tumble into the shops on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, get out a hurried order, and then remain idle the rest of the week?

Or, go to the Wright Aeroplane Works in the same city. Under the false claim that the Department of Justice required it, all employes of that concern were finger-printed by a private detective agency. Unionization is needful there. But can it come when only 300 of a normal working force of 2,800 are employed?

These are dilemmas that face the organizer. World-disquieting depression has almost every industry in its grip. The out-of-works, without any protective compensation from the State, are potential strikebreakers, every one of them. Those who have jobs of a sort cling to them, fearful of discharge.

"Depression is no time to organize," the slothful say, and some who are not so slothful. And yet, when better times were here, it was said then that the workers were over-contented. They were too well fed and well-clothed and well-equipped to think of unionism. "Prosperity is no time to organize," it was stated then.

The obvious deduction from such reasoning would be: "No time is a good time to organize." No matter what you say, Brother, we flatly refuse to believe that. There is too much blindness and bewilderment about it. Much better and more helpful is the thought that "Any time is a good time to organize," provided the proper shift in methods be adopted.

During depression workers may be fearful, but they are restless, too. Their minds are open to a message of revolt, if the one giving that message have enough confidence about him. Striking may be out of the question, but not the preliminaries that may lead to an effective strike on a more auspicious occasion.

It is right here that the American Federation of Labor has made the gravest blunder of its career. When the Boston convention turned its back upon the compulsory unemployment insurance idea, it played into the hands of Company Unionism and Open Shopery. "Voluntary Insurance" is the plan of the General Electric—explained by Owen D. Young in the NEW YORK AMERICAN of October 12th. It is a clever adjunct to the industrial pension schemes and welfare work of the Open Shop employers—

all devised to snuff out pro-union aspirations. Further than that, the stand of the A. F. of L. takes from its hands the most powerful instrument that it had, to appeal to the unorganized. The championship of compulsory unemployment insurance at the factory gates would have been a skillful introduction to the need for organization. The A. F. of L. unions would have appeared as champions of the out-of-work population.

Sadly enough, the A. F. of L. continues to live in the era of Bryanism, small shopkeepers and handicraft labor. When it will face the problems of Hooverism, huge corporations and mass production, the gods alone can foretell. A sneaking suspicion may fairly be harbored that the next convention of the Federation will see a rightabout face on the entire issue. Meanwhile, valuable time and valuable propaganda chances have been lost. Sometimes we are tempted to wonder: "Does the A. F. of L. really want to organize the unorganized?" The attempt to do so is such a bother!

### PROGRESSIVES CAN BE POSITIVE

**W**HILE the A. F. of L. has put itself in the good graces of the National Association of Manufacturers by pulling the latter's unemployment insurance chestnuts out of the fire, Progressives have some positive things to do.

Criticism of A. F. of L. inertia is not enough. We have a bigger job to do than just that. It is left to us to get out in the country and put across that vigorous propaganda which the A. F. of L. has rejected.

We have not the financial resources of the official family of the American Federation of Labor. We have something vastly different: Determination to be something other than papier-mache editions of J. Pierpont Morgan or of the executives of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. We can do much with little, if we set ourselves to doing it. If any one of us lack the red wrath to bestir ourselves, go to the haunts of the out-of-works, behold the haggard faces and hear the unholy tales of the search for work. Go also to any "Open Shop"—"open" now largely to let men out—and learn of the fear which numbs allegedly free Americans.

The program of the C. P. L. A. for the next few months calls for:

1. A vigorous drive for UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE, including a nation-wide petition of the unemployed for Federal legislation to encourage the States, and the continued campaign to secure action favorable to this object by labor organizations.

2. Extended efforts for the ORGANIZATION OF THE UNORGANIZED, along industrial lines, in basic industries.

3. Definite agitation for INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ACTION in selected localities, with the formation of local labor parties as the objective.

Such are not words and phrases formulated to look nice on a printed page. They are to be acted upon in all their ramifications, in order that Progressives may travel along the road to a positive goal—the begining of new life in the American Labor Movement. They are to be carried out in not one, but in many localities. Voluntary cooperation of many willing hands and brains is required to put them through. We need:

1. Correspondents in every industrial center of the country, to advise us of the political and industrial conditions existing, and to stimulate publicity in local newspapers.

2. Representatives to do the job of getting petitions signed

and in interesting the workers in the C. P. L. A. program in an active way.

We look forward to volunteers, out in the American country, who can speak "the American language." It is an adventure more than worth the effort which it entails, especially for those who possess the youthful folly of believing eternally in the fruitfulness of pioneering.

## The Man Without A Hoe

*Bowed by hunger gnawing at his vitals  
And without the hoe to lean upon,  
He pursues his weary useless quest for work.  
The emptiness of famine in his face  
And on his back a faded, tattered coat  
Despised and rejected of pawnbrokers.  
Who took from this efficient man his hoe  
And the bounteous fruits of his labor  
And left him despoiled, destitute, helpless,  
To starve in his own fair land of plenty?*

*Is this poor starving man, hollow-eyed and gaunt,  
The end and purpose of our generous plan,  
Of years devoted to the gain of knowledge?  
Was it for this he toiled arduously to learn,  
Literature, art, music and science;  
To measure the heat of far distant stars;  
To break-up the atom and weigh the parts?  
Without hoe or tools, what profit to have learned,  
To cultivate the soil for rich harvest;  
To pierce dark depths of earth's resisting crust  
And tap its stores of hidden energy?*

*What gulfs between the worker and the workless man!  
Living, first in plenty, then in poverty;  
Yesterday—a valued, honored citizen  
Of his own native land; working faithfully  
To develop its boundless resources;  
Exulting in his accomplishments and skill,  
As he drives a car, or steers a giant ship,  
Or speeds on wings o'er sun-lit billowy clouds,  
Or circles the globe with his voice on ether waves—  
Today—unwanted, pitiful vagrant,  
Forsaken by those who were by him enriched.*

*O brothers, we are rulers of this land,  
As we decree, so shall our fortunes be.  
How can we tolerate this strange paradox,  
Of fellow-man, trained to serve with skill,  
Product of our lavish gifts of schooling,  
Abandoned, perishing, less valued than the ox.  
Do we build the man, but to destroy him  
With the deadly poison of selfishness  
And greed which courses through our members?*

*O brothers, heirs and rulers of our land,  
Unfaithful stewards of our heritage,  
Of riches, knowledge and wisdom of ages;  
How shall we answer Him who gave us wealth,  
When want and famine stalk amidst abundance?  
How long in silence can this man endure,  
Hunger and lack, confronted by vast wealth,  
The product of his own skilled hand and brain?  
How will it be with us when he shall rise  
To avenge his wrongs and claim his heritage.*

# "All Hands On Deck"

BEFORE going into the details of the hopes, plans and works of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, we can broadcast this assurance that no hands need be idle which want work to do. Whether it is circulating petitions for federal legislation on unemployment insurance, whether organizing conferences in your community on state unemployment insurance legislation, whether holding indoor and outdoor meetings for dissemination of information on the same subject—every one can keep busy at this job of stirring the social conscience to a realization of its responsibility towards this grave problem of workers willing to work but unable to find jobs. If there is hesitancy in undertaking or in planning any program of action because of method, a word to national headquarters will relieve this difficulty.

We shall probably go back to this subject before the tale of this month's doings is done. Now let us take a sort of bird's eye glance over the field of action and evaluate the accomplishments and possibilities for those engaged in the progressive cause. Foremost on the list is our efforts on behalf of our unemployment insurance drive. Regardless of the attitude of the American Federation of Labor and the National Manufacturers' Association towards this problem, the workers who stand on the bread lines or before the employment agencies, who have to face the forthcoming winter unprotected and without income, take an entirely different view of the matter. These are intensely interested in the proposal for compulsory state relief and flock to our open air meetings, at which the C.P.L.A. plan is explained to them, in great and enthusiastic numbers. Our literature is snatched out of the hands of the distributors with an eagerness that is pathetic. What a service the official Labor Movement could have rendered these suffering workers if it had the vision to fight with them for social aid rather than against them for the wholly inadequate and degrading soup kitchens and bread lines.

Nevertheless, they are being taught that at least one section

of Labor is fighting their battles for decency. The open air meetings that are being addressed almost daily by Louis F. Budenz, A. J. Muste, Leonard Bright and others, are mobbed by unemployed who stand for hours on the chilly street corners waiting for a word of hope. They sign our petitions with equal eagerness and there is every assurance that before Congress convenes in December, hundreds of thousands of unemployed shall have registered their will that this rich government do something more than talk about the question. It will be a formidable demand.

These petitions have been sent all over the country. From New York to Seattle, Wash., thousands of them are distributed across the continent and are being circulated in practically every industrial center of consequence. Already they are coming back, filled to the very end with the names of carpenters, laborers, executives, office workers, salesmen, lithographers, engravers, teachers, blacksmiths, electricians, domestics, waiters and of every conceivable calling one could think of. All good Americans enthusiastic about our proposal for unemployment insurance. When these petitions will finally be presented to Congress they will represent a cross

section of American life that will astound the law makers.

Many unions are taking these petitions for distribution among their membership. Painters' District No. 9 of New York City is helping in this work. Pocketbook Workers' Union is doing likewise.

The unemployment insurance drive, important as that is, constitutes only one phase of our active program. While the American Federation of Labor was voting down unemployment insurance in Boston, the progressives, including delegates to the A. F. of L. convention, foregathered in a meeting of their own in that city to discuss the problems which Labor should have taken up at its annual conclave but which it signally failed to do. Despite the fact that competition of the American Legion, which strutted through the streets in military parade all the day of Tuesday, October 7, was so fierce as to cause the adjournment of the A. F. of L. convention, an enthusiastic audience greeted our speakers that night as they advanced the C. P. L. A. program on militarism, on industrial unionism, on social legislation, on the Negro and on the general tendency of the A. F. of L. to become more and more conservative and passive with each passing year.

As a matter of fact, we were the only organization that dared put up resistance to the liquor guzzling, fool antics and war struttings of the 75,000 Legionnaires which filled every downtown Boston highway from store front to store front. That's a record that will always stand. Louis F. Budenz and A. J. Muste, Executive Secretary and Chairman of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action respectively, and Elmer Anderson Carter, Editor of OPPORTUNITY of the National Urban League, were the speakers on that occasion.

## II

And now we have begun our organization work in earnest. With Louis F. Budenz in charge, things are beginning to hum around headquarters and the telephone wires are burning with requests for assistance in organization work. In Bayonne among the oil workers, in Paterson among the tex-

## WHY NOT?



This cartoon by Talbert appeared in Scripps-Howard papers with the caption "A Good Policy!"

tile operatives and in Philadelphia among neckwear workers, with and without the help of union organizations already in the field, the call for aid has been answered. Conferences are now taking place on all three fronts. Very soon there will be interesting tales to tell.

Let it be understood that when organization work is being done by the C. P. L. A. it is not the 2x4 brand of regular labor organizers. While the effort is made to get the textile workers of Paterson, the neckwear workers of Philadelphia and the oil workers of Bayonne into unions, they will also hear about independent political action, about anti-militarism and anti-imperialism, about the insecurity under capitalism and the vision of a better life in a better world. The beginnings will here be made for the rejuvenation of the Labor Movement as a whole that will eventually discard the antiquated, anarchic philosophy of the Greens and the Wolls, and reestablish Labor as the vanguard of progressivism in America. Mark this period in American labor history as the rebirth of militant unionism, the new unionism that will have the will and the courage to tackle the problems thrown upon labor by the new technology; that will have the self assurance to go forth and unite the millions of unorganized workers which today are left severely alone.

The request for our assistance, coming as it does from officials in the Labor Movement, is the best evidence of all that the official A. F. of L. machinery has broken down, as far as organization work is concerned. Carl Holderman, with whom the work is carried on in Paterson, organizer for the Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers, has long recognized this fact for he became an officer of the C. P. L. A. from the very start. The others are now beginning to realize their dilemma and the correctness of the C. P. L. A. program.

While all this is happening, the members and branches can be helpful in their own communities spreading the C. P. L. A. idea, in organizing agitation for unemployment insurance and in getting closer to the workers with the message of unionism. Those petitions, of which mention has already been made, should be in the hands of every C. P. L. A.er. It is the easiest thing in the world to get signatures for this petition. The first day an effort was made in that direction, four young members of Pioneer Youth, who went out to the employment agencies for signatures, returned

in less than an hour with more than 200 names. They would have gotten more but the police stopped them with the excuse they were blocking traffic. The unemployed surrounded the four youths in such great numbers, anxious to sign the petitions, that disinterested passers-by had a difficult time to be on their way. We sent Joe Schwartz of Philadelphia a batch of petitions one day and the next two of them were returned completely filled. Carl Brannin of Seattle, Wash., got another batch and by the time the return mail reaches New York he will be asking for more blanks. Thousands of petitions were sent out in this manner during the past month. So here is a chance to do something effective for the progressive cause and at the same time get closer to the unemployed; to find out how they really feel and what they are thinking of.

Another method is to hold meetings on the street corners where large numbers of workers pass by. In this way our message can be delivered three-fold simultaneously — through the speaker, through the petitions and through C. P. L. A. literature which can be distributed at the same time. New York as well as Philadelphia have adopted that method.

In addition, there is the need for getting wider groups interested in unemployment legislation. Buffalo is following a campaign along these lines, calling into conference representatives of organizations and associations interested in this kind of law.

You can now take your choice as to what procedure to follow.

### III

One of the best arguments for unemployment insurance made by a trade unionist was brought to light in correspondence between George Q. Lynch, Business Manager, Patternmakers Association of New York and vicinity and the International President of that organization. Favoring a resolution on unemployment insurance which he asked to be introduced at the Boston A. F. of L. Convention, Brother Lynch wrote his President:

"We are all agreed that the best remedy for unemployment is employment, just as we believe that getting well is the best cure for sickness. But in this instance we are confronted with the very definite situation of no employment being available.

"When our government gave the railroads a substantial 'doe' following the war to help them meet their obligations to owners of 'watered stock,' it was not construed as charity. When the manufacturers of our country

seek protection against competition by means of a tariff, it is not considered paternalistic. No one seems to worry about breaking the initiative or blighting the hopes of the industrial barons and big bankers when they seek government protection and assistance in foreign lands. But just as soon as those who work for a living seek to insure their future against actual privation, it is cause for national worry lest their initiative, morals and hopes be blighted."

Therefore, Mr. Lynch resolves:

"That we call upon the several states and national government to institute some form of sound insurance protection against the suffering caused by labor saving machinery."

Needless to repeat, the fine logic and economic soundness of Brother Lynch's views were all wasted. The President of the Patternmakers did not introduce this resolution nor did he speak on the question when it came before the A. F. of L. delegates. Even though, however, the A. F. of L. meets in Vancouver, B. C., next year, it will not be able to dodge the issue. It will bob up ever and anon, always with stronger emphasis until it will be settled right.

While on the subject of progressive, or retrogressive action within the trade union movement, the interpretation of the California State Federation of Labor Convention by Brother Fred West is illuminating. "On the whole," he writes, "things were very quiet at Marysville this year. There was a great deal of talk about unemployment and the Philippine situation but no important resolutions passed that dealt with the vital questions confronting American labor. No Mooney resolutions were presented but the Federation reiterated the former stand on behalf of Mooney and Billings. Three resolutions were presented at the convention that had any tinge of progressivism about them. Two of them were snowed under with but one dissenting vote (the correspondent's), and the other one on a Labor Party received about 25 votes.

"On the unemployment question I introduced a resolution calling for direct relief to the workers. The one that was adopted asked the A. F. of L. to appoint a committee to study remedial legislation. That day the newspapers came out with headlines — 'Labor Turns Down British Dole System!'"

### IV

Progressives will have a grand opportunity to meet fellow progressives and obtain a thorough review of pres-

## TRICKS OF THE TRADE



Drawn for Labor Age by Herbert Heasley

ent trends in the Labor Movement during the forthcoming second Regional Conference called in New York City for Saturday and Sunday, December 6 and 7, at the Labor Temple, 14th St. and Second Ave. The subject of the Conference will be "Labor in the 'New Economic Era' (Era of Hard Times)."

The Conference will start on Saturday afternoon, December 6, with a discussion of "Practical Dilemmas Facing Militant Unions." Saturday evening there will be a dinner meeting to hear two outstanding speakers on "Two Unsolved Problems—The Negro and the World Depression." On Sunday, the morning session is to cover "As Women Look At Industry." The conference will wind up on Sunday afternoon with a general discus-

sion, at which no formal speech making will take place, but in which all delegates and friends may participate, on "Positive Action for the New Economic Era."

The speakers who have been invited, most of whom have already accepted, are Jacob Roberts of the Neckwear Workers, Carl Holderman of the Hosiery Workers, Sam Laderman of the Pocketbook Workers, Walter White, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Mary Hillyer of Dressmakers Local, I. L. G. W., Josephine Kaczor, Philadelphia Women's Trade Union League, Ruth Shallcross, Lucy Carner, National Secretary, Y. W. C. A., A. J. Muste, Louis F. Budenz and others.

Those who have attended our previous regional Conference need not

be urged to attend. We know that they will come again, unless blizzards and earthquakes prevent. All others can be assured of a week-end unique in their experiences. Good fellowship and clear understanding of the forces operating in the field covered will make you ask for more when it is all over.

Branches are asked to act immediately in the selection of delegates and to forward these names on blanks to be supplied them. Individuals should act with similar promptness, sending in their registrations as early as possible. More detailed information as to the dinner and the complete program will be supplied later to all elected delegates and those who register.

### C. P. L. A. STATEMENT ON FAILURE OF A. F. OF L. TO INDORSE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

The failure of the American Federation of Labor convention to endorse unemployment insurance may be taken as a sure sign that the plan will soon be adopted. Years ago certain A. F. of L. officials opposed workmen's compensation for accidents, a fact now lost sight of by many, but long since workmen's compensation has been adopted and the A. F. of L. is glad to claim credit for the achievement. In the 1928 convention old age pensions were opposed; in 1929 the idea was adopted by the convention after other agencies had created a tremendous public sentiment in favor of it. Now the A. F. of L. convention votes down compulsory unemployment insurance. What conclusion can we draw except that the measure is well on its way to ultimate success?

In opposing compulsory unemployment insurance President Green and Vice-President Woll place themselves by the side of the private insurance companies and those staunch friends of labor, John E. Edgerton of the National Manufacturers' Association and Ralph Easly of the National Civic Federation, the valiant slayer of dragons, Russian preferred. These officers of the A. F. of L. at the same time place themselves on the opposite side from even such pink liberals as Franklin Roosevelt, and such cautious economists as Professor John R. Commons. They are in queer company indeed!

Green's and Woll's arguments, as reported in the New York Times, are without exception unsound, specious, but shrewdly calculated to deceive workers as to the real issues involved.

1. Unemployment insurance is called a "dole." Give the dog a bad name, is the policy. President Zaritsky of the Capmakers did well to ask the convention whether insurance was a "dole," but charity accepted by workers from the wives of exploiters of labor something else. What but charity is the plan just announced by Seward Prosser of the Bankers Trust Co. to raise private contributions of \$150,000 per week as a pay roll for unemployed heads of families in New York City? We must have unemployment insurance in this country to prevent the universal establishment of the "dole."

2. If unemployment insurance is established, workers will be deprived of their liberty by being placed under the supervision of state and federal government, "which would require him to register" and to carry "an industrial passport," Mr. Woll wails. Did anybody ever hear of a worker who objected to carrying a bank book entitling him to draw money from the government's postal savings bank or any other bank? And how does Mr. Woll figure that workers out of jobs will get them without registering through the public employment exchanges he favors? Or is he secretly against these also and in favor of the private employment agencies which bleed the workers white?

3. Unemployment insurance, pontificates Mr. Woll, would be tantamount to a confession by labor that it "has produced too much and therefore must accept too little." There are tens of millions of workers, including some even among Mr. Woll's Photo Engravers, who don't have to confess that. Everybody knows they get too little when they work. That's why they will soon rise up and demand insurance to keep them alive when they are out of work.

4. Mr. Green feels that under compulsory unemployment insurance the worker as "a ward of the state" will be compelled to accept any work offered him or lose his insurance. What does Mr. Green think a worker does now when after receiving starvation wages he is thrown out of work, other than to accept "any work offered him"? And would he not be able to exercise more independence if he had his insurance to fall back on? Besides, the worker can be amply protected under an unemployment insurance scheme against being compelled to accept jobs under disadvantageous conditions.

The fundamental difficulty is that Mr. Green and Mr. Woll assume that the profit system can set its own house in order, whereas it is impossible, as one of the delegates pointed out, for a system operated "for profit, not service," to prevent or effectively relieve unemployment.

## LABOR STUDENTS CROWD BROOKWOOD'S TENTH YEAR

(*Special to Labor Age*)

**I**T is now ten years since Brookwood was founded, and two years since the A. F. of L. issued its "Un-American, Atheistic and Red" denunciation against it. Forty students from 25 industries crowd the class rooms and dormitories to capacity and a little beyond. These are all new students. In former years, about half the student body held over from the first to the second year classes, but with the establishment of a basic one-year course, a completely new group was recruited. It is no small achievement to have accomplished this in the face of general economic depression, and the failure of the A. F. of L. to check Brookwood's influence may be judged thereby.

Textile workers, machinists, needle trades workers, railway clerks, farmers, pocketbook makers, unskilled workers from various crafts, teachers, food workers, miners and carpenters are numbered among the students. Brookwood's ideal of a completely rounded Labor Movement operating on the trade union, cooperative and political fields is given point by the presence of two Cooperative League members and several who have done labor party propaganda and organization work.

Four of the students are Negroes, ranging from a common laborer all the way from New Orleans to a graduate of Howard and Ohio State universities. In addition to the usual American melting pot of nationalities, there are students from Germany, England, Costa Rica and Guatemala. The two latter, officially selected by Central American unions, may represent the first link in the chain between progressive trade unionism in the two Americas.

Prominent is the schedule of classes, ranging from American history and foreign labor under A. J. Muste to economics by J. C. Kennedy and Tom Tippett, and labor history and problems by David J. Saposs. English and public speaking are taught by Josephine Colby; labor journalism by Helen G. Norton.

There are four college graduates rubbing elbows with fellow students who went to work at 10 or 13 years of age. They are not in the least high-hat. (One of them is stoking the furnace and another waiting tables if that is any indication.) Sincerely interested in the Labor Movement, they have come to Brookwood to get

what all their work in orthodox institutions could not give them—labor background and training.

As Brookwood starts on the last year of its first decade in workers education, it may perhaps be pardoned a measure of pride in having survived, not only the first lean years of pioneering, but also the Left-Right struggle which rent the whole Labor Movement, a split in the workers education movement which has left the official Workers Education Bureau emasculated and languishing, and a severe economic depression that has crippled every social agency in greater or lesser degree.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, of *Labor Age*, published monthly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1930, State of New York, County of New York, ss.:

Before me, a notary public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Leonard Bright, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of *Labor Age* and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411, *Postal Laws and Regulations*, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

Publisher—*Labor Publication Society, Inc.*, 104 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Editor—Louis Francis Budenz, 104 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Managing Editor—Louis Francis Budenz, 104 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Business Manager—Leonard Bright, 104 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

2. That the owner is (If owned by a corporation its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given).

*Labor Publication Society, Inc.*, (a membership corporation with approximately 200 members); James H. Maurer, President, 1355 N. 11th St., Reading, Pa.; Harry W. Laidler, Treasurer, 112 E. 19th St., New York City; Louis Francis Budenz, Secretary, 104 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees and other security holders owning 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) None.

LEONARD BRIGHT,  
Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 8th day of October, 1930.

(Seal) PETER R. HAWLEY,  
Notary Public.

(My commission expires March 30, 1931)

# In Other Lands

The past five or six weeks have been crowded ones for the British workers and their leaders in the industrial and political arenas. One of the most important trade union congresses ever held in Britain met and dealt with a volume of complicated business, almost bewildering in scope, in a practical and, on the whole, statesmanlike manner. There was much plain speaking and new blood came to the front.

Strange as it may sound, the most significant action on the part of the Congress was not a purely working class measure. It had to do with the Council's report on economics and trade with the other British Dominions, colonies and dependencies. An imperial or Federal Labor Secretariat was recommended. It recovered some steps lost some time ago by insisting that the workers get their share of the profits of rationalization and the victims of it be taken care of. As an offset to the advancing technique in industry, unions were advised to campaign for the five-day week and shorter hours so that displaced labor may be re-employed. Pensions for workers when they reach the age of 60 was advocated and the complex problem of the family allowances was intelligently discussed. Shiva Rao, a delegate from India, contributed to the education of the British by a clear exposition of the social, industrial and political troubles of his country, especially of his own province of Madras. It was unpleasant to be told that 66 per cent of the country's revenue was spent on the army of occupation and only one per cent on public health. Rao was honored by interruptions from the Communists, a number of whom sneaked into the hall.

British labor was further educated by delegates from all over the empire who assembled at Westminster. They told the British they did not want emigrants to accentuate their unemployed problem; nor did they care for free trade, or an awful lot about imperial preference. Indeed, except New Zealand, the Dominion labor men, whether in political office or not, were frank protectionists. At this conference the Indian delegates got in some telling propaganda for their country. Some of them did it so well that they won the admiration and applause of the British who are themselves past masters if not the inventors of propaganda.

Political news was more dramatic than even the economic. The Labor Party Conference at Wales was a record breaker. Despite hard times the party membership increased by five thousand. It was claimed for the leadership that were it not for the appalling and overshadowing unemployment problem the past year would have stood out from all others in achievement and in progressive legislation. But instead of pride in the work done there is much criticism because of the extraordinary increase in the number of unemployed. World wide depression hit the British harder in that they are operating a world economy while most of their neighboring countries are

ed than in previous years. The demand for parliamentary reform was, strange to say, not well supported as one would expect from the agitation over it.

The biggest sensation was furnished in the defeat of J. H. Thomas for the Executive. Another member of the government, Morgan Jones, was also exiled.

Ben Turner secured the place of Thomas and Oswald Mosley is once more on the Executive while another aristocrat in the person of Lady Mabel Smith landed with him. It must not be interpreted that Sir Oswald was rewarded for his radicalism or that Thomas was punished for his conservatism. Mosley has been much in the public eye and his resignation from the government as a protest against the ineptitude of the Administration on several important questions some months ago, with his title, undoubtedly added to his popularity. On the whole he has been a very useful member of Parliament and his contributions to debates have been always weighty and full of serious thought. Joseph Devlin and several old parliamentary hands have often praised the speeches of Mosley. Thomas is the first government victim of the unemployment muddle; and yet impartial commentators have said no one could have bettered the situation or done any more than he did. Had Snowden supported the plans of Thomas the latter might have had more success

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as a reliever of unemployment. On the whole it will redound to the party's good to have Thomas down a peg for he had grown too full of his own importance.

The tariff is likely to split the party or cause bad blood in its ranks due to the large numbers of office workers on salaries and middle classes with limited incomes in the party. The latter especially have been growing very strong of late years since the old Liberal Party went into decline. Snowden is their best representative and Free Trade is their cardinal principle. Workers in basic industries, such as steel, motors, textiles and chemicals are inclined towards protection owing to outside competition.

Of international importance was the Imperial Conference in which all the Dominion Premiers or their representatives took part. India, though not a Dominion, was represented by one of its princes. The conference discussed the tariff and it was seriously proposed to have a mu-

## EVER PRESENT



The Sunday Mail (Glasgow)

operating a national economy. A depression in the remotest part of the earth is felt in Britain for they are world traders.

One noticed a strong progressive trend and a declining extreme left development. Anything bordering on too severe criticism when incorporated in resolutions was overwhelmingly defeated. Resolutions that were moderate in tone, though opposed by the leaders, gained substantial support from the delegates. One was beaten by less than a quarter of the entire vote. Maxton's plea for MacDonald netted the I. L. P., which is growing more and more anti-administration, and caused a small sensation. The resolution on disarmament moved by Fenner Brockway was bitterly attacked by Henderson. It did not get a rosy reception on account of its extreme pacifism. Reform measures such as old age pensions, care of mothers, rent restrictions, and abolition of slums got vigorous support. The attack on the banks was better support-

(Continued on page 29)



# “Say It With Books”



## Russia Under Review

**Soviet Economic Development and American Business.** Saul G. Bron. N. Y.: Horace Liveright, 1930. 147 pp. \$1.50.  
**Economic Trends in Soviet Russia.** A. Yugoff. Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. N. Y.: Richard R. Smith, 1930. 349 pp. \$4.25.

**About Russia.** By Ernest J. P. Benn. N. Y.: D. Appleton & Co., 1930. 168 pp. \$2.00.

IT would be difficult to find three books on Soviet Russia written from more contrasting angles than the above volumes. Mr. Bron's book dealing with the results of the first year under the five year plan, is written by a former chairman of the Board of Directors of the Amtorg Trading Corporation and an ardent advocate of the Stalin regime.

It bristles with facts and figures which come direct from headquarters regarding the increase in production in steel, coal, agricultural machinery and all sorts of other products which Russia is aiming to produce with greater abundance in the years to come and gives a detailed description of this remarkable plan. The latter part of the book endeavors to draw the moral for American business men and to bring vividly to their attention that "business is business," whether it be with a Tory or a Bolshevik government and that recognition would probably carry with it more business for American capitalists. While the book fails to point out a number of the negative features in the five-year plan, it gives an array of valuable data in a clear and convenient form, and as such is a welcome addition to the literature on modern Russia.

The study by Mr. Yugoff is an English edition of a book published in German and Russian in the Spring of 1929 and translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. The book is an attempt to appraise recent changes in Russia in a critical and scientific spirit in the light of the socialist ideal. It concludes that, while a number of interesting and valuable social experiments are taking place in Soviet Russia, Russia has not been able to jump steps in the evolutionary process, and

the situation in Russia now is far from Utopian. The book should be read carefully by those who are inclined to take the statements issued by the Soviet government at their face value, and the author is correct in his belief that it will take a number of decades before Russia can be considered a genuinely

all, respects, makes Mr. Yugoff's picture of difficulties seem more pessimistic than the present situation warrants. Russia is finding a way to accumulate capital and to collectivize agriculture which seemed extremely unlikely when Mr. Yugoff's book was finished. However, this is being done at a tremendous physical sacrifice, and at the price of much persecution.

Mr. Benn is one of the most vigorous opponents of Socialism in England today. He has never been in Russia. He maintains that he would never go so long as the present regime, with its present ideas, is in force. The author feels that this refusal to visit Russia, far from disqualifying him as an authority on the subject, has fitted him "more especially as a fair judge of the great problem which that country represents."

He uses the Russian regime as an opportunity to attack not only Communism, but Socialism as well. Much of the book consists of a restatement of gossip he heard while staying in the Baltic states, some of it true, much of it unreliable. The book, though forcefully and popularly written, contains little meat and adds little to the knowledge of the present Russian situation.

HARRY W. LAIDLER.



Photo by Gladys Boone  
**A monument erected near the Kremlin at Moscow in honor of the revolutionary poets and writers of the world. Their names are inscribed on the pillar.**

Socialist society. The poverty, the lack of technical ability, the dictatorship, the spirit of gain still found in the republic must all be overcome before Russia emerges into a socialist society. Whether the author underestimates the gains made during the last few years and overestimates the obstacles that must still be overcome and the possibility of a definite reaction, time alone can tell. The apparent success of the Five Year plan and the farm collectivization movement in many, although not

**A Ford Crosses Soviet Russia,** by Prof. George S. Counts. Stratford Co., Boston. \$2.50.

THIS is a unique close-up of life in Soviet Russia made by a pioneer trip of 6,000 miles over the dirt roads and through the villages where in some cases an auto had never been seen before. The author's trip was no conducted tour for he was alone the greater part of the journey and with a knowledge of Russian he was able to gather the opinions of the peasants direct.

"During the five-year period from October, 1928, to October, 1933, Russia must find sixty-five billion rubles for construction alone," comments the author in explanation of the scarcity of goods in Russia. "Since there is no im-

mediate likelihood that any important part of this amount can be borrowed from other countries, Soviet Russia, in spite of her poverty, must in some way secure the needed funds from her own savings. This means that the present must be sacrificed for the future to an unprecedented extent. In order that credit may be secured for the purchase from abroad of the indispensable machinery, every ounce of manufactured goods that can be spared must be sent to foreign markets."

No one interested in Soviet Russia should miss this book.

MARK STARR.

## AN INTERLOCKED WORLD

**Changing Civilizations in the Modern World,** by Harold Rugg. Ginn & Co., 663 Pages. \$1.96.

HAROLD RUGG and his colleagues of Teachers' College in the textbook "Changing Civilizations in the Modern World" have made a notable contribution to building up that world outlook which will enable people to live safely in the interlocked world of the 20th century. Their Social Science Pamphlets have been tried out and constantly improved since 1921. There is a wealth of maps and pictorial material to make this and other well-bound books in a more permanent form an effective introduction to the life of other lands. As the title implies, this is no erroneous static view of things. There is no nonsense about the unchanging East or Nordic superiority. The facts given show that the place of the U. S. in the world is not on top but in the circle with the other groups, from which she differs only because of geographic, economic and historical factors herein made clear.

In startling contrast to the average textbook, this one explains why economic rivalries caused the World War although, in explaining the entry of the U. S., it is the submarine attacks on American vessels and not the loans made to the Allies which receive emphasis. Tsarist oppression receives attention as the cause of the Russian Revolution and while the tremendous handicap of foreign intervention to support Kolchak, Wrangel and their ilk is ignored, the book is a model of fairness to many we have been unfortunate enough to study. The book is unwittingly propagandist for co-operation between the peoples because the facts point that way. We should feel much more satisfied about the progress of the human race if this book becomes widely used inside and outside the schools in all lands.

MARK STARR.

## THE SLIPPING NAPOLEON

**Capital and Labor Under Fascism.** By Carmen Haider, Ph.D. Columbia University Press, New York. 296 pp. \$4.50.

EXT to Russia the country about which there is most speculation is Italy. But unlike Russia, where everything from the distillation of vodka to the erection of a \$10,000,000 steel plant is broadcast with equal gusto to an astonished world, the scarcity of news from Italy is simply astounding. How a western nation can so effectively keep the rest of the world in ignorance about the things that really matter is one of those secrets not yet divulged. To judge by the news, reportorial and pictorial, that emanates from that sunny land, Mussolini does nothing but make saber-rattling speeches and the rest of the folk gather daily and gaily in the public square, black shirted, to make loud acclaim and to do him honor.

But of course there is something else to keep Italy going, regardless of where it may be headed. And that something else is very studiously—too studiously, we think—described in "Capital and Labor Under Fascism." While the author spared no pains to do a good job, and she partly succeeded for all those who like the sort of book that is so objective, uncritical and scientific that it reads like a report of the tsetse fly by the United States Department of Health, she failed in the long run to tell a story that is meaningful to most people. Italians, I am told, are not tsetse flies. By leaving out facts of dynamic Italy, wages, cost of living, working conditions; by squeezing the hot, human blood out of the fine Italian temperament, by attempting to maintain a complete balance of neutrality and interest, Dr. Carmen's effort can be of use only to those who can add of their own knowledge to that which the author presents.

Perhaps that was the purpose of the study. If so, then a trained observer can find much food for speculation in the volume under review. The inevitable conclusion is that Mussolini and his black shirts are slipping. The modern Napoleon has found no key to the solution of the classless State. Determined to dissolve the class struggle, Mussolini, after six years of effort, is forced to invite back to Italy some of the Socialists in Paris exiled immediately after the rise of the black shirts, with a guarantee of a safe return to their country, if they will only come back "and accept the direction of various fascist enterprises . . ." But the Socialists always refuse and the people are getting more and more restless. Again, fascist leaders are afraid "to

grant greater liberty to the people after they have once been suppressed, for much hatred is breeding under the surface, and it may then find expression." And finally, the author concludes, "the economic situation is decidedly depressed and there seems to be no indications of improvement, which would warrant the conclusion that the fascists are not likely to realize their aims."

I have purposely refrained from giving more of the book than what is to be found at the end of the story because beyond the academic interest in the principles of fascism, which in a word, is to create a state loyalty through syndicalist organization transcending the economic interest of the citizens, the study does not record one achievement of real consequence during the reign of the black shirts. The capitalists are having more of their own way than ever before; the workers are subjected to discriminations, suppressions, reduced wage and living standards without an opportunity for redress; and insincerity and hypocrisy are encouraged in national life. Evidently it is only a matter of time before democratic procedure will be reestablished once again.

While the volume can be recommended to students of Labor who have a thorough background with which to judge balanced observations, the job of reporting the real Italy is still left to an observer much more human and a little less uncritical.

ISRAEL MUFSON.

## CIPHERS THAT SUFFER

**Some Folks Won't Work.** By Clinch Calkins. Harcourt Brace & Co., New York, \$1.50.

A NYTHING that will make one "hot and bothered" is an admirable antidote to the complacency and helpless senility that characterizes present American reaction. To watch daily the straggling lines of hungry unemployed, meekly waiting in front of employment agencies, private or public, shuffling and silent, is to make one wonder whether the "he men" of American history were just pure fiction. Their descendants are as docile as the six ciphers behind the numeral five, six or seven, whatever the guess may be of the number out of work. The hapless idle themselves having lost any of the "guts" that characterizes "rugged" individualities, other sections of the community are no more excited. If they starve without protest, let them.

But then comes "Some Folks Won't Work," and something happens inwardly. It makes you sick, sore and then angry, anxious to stand up and shout:

"Listen, you — — — capitalists, and some of you labor leaders, too, for that matter. This is your damn prosperity. This is your boastfulness of American supremacy—broken lives and broken hopes; wreckage carelessly slung on the scrap heaps while you hypocrites slaver about independence, abundance and morality. This, look you, is the dung heap of your industrial bellyache over which you fawn and which you desire to glorify."

You also, while reading this chronicle of America's miserableness, get desperate at the slavish helplessness of the unemployed, of these "gutless" creatures, these inane weaklings, these stupid worshippers of empty heroes and emptier traditions who cringe in their holes without murmur or protest, who vote Republican, only to crawl quietly back into the same holes to deteriorate and die.

"Some Folks Won't Work" is a collection of social service cases, brought forth from the pages of social investigators during the most prosperous years in American history. There is no fire in its presentation. There is no rebellious call to arms. All it does is to lift the cover off of our economic garbage can and lets you take a good look. It gives life, such as it is, to the six ciphers behind the numeral. It does it delicately. It does it with circumspection and sweetness, just as all social service reports I have heard over and over again, do. But its effect, because of the process of repetition, is powerful. It turns the stomach first and arouses anger next.

For part of the apathy towards the suffering that is revealed (and the situations disclosed are not of the "depression" era but of the years before, when Hoover and his henchmen were inundating the country with "chicken in every pot" propaganda), the social agencies themselves must take complete responsibility. Most of them stood behind Hoover and the Republican Party and permitted no inkling of their findings,

which they had in their possession, to become public property. Even more, some of them conspired to keep the knowledge of the suffering of the millions of workers away from the rest of us. The Charity Organization Society of the City of New York sent a letter to prospective contributors early in 1930 stating that if the latter do not come across with donations, the Charity Society will make the facts public.

At any rate, any book that will disturb one's serenity is very good. "Some Folks Won't Work" is that sort of book.

ISRAEL MUFSON.

### LIES IN EDUCATION

*Civic Attitudes in American School Textbooks*, by Prof. Bettie L. Pierce, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill.

**I**N "Civic Attitudes in American School Textbooks" Professor Bettie L. Pierce has again rendered a signal service to the cause of truth and the movement for internationalism and world peace. In her impartial and scholarly manner, Prof. Pierce shows by a careful analysis of 400 books in the social sciences, readers, etc., what the radicals and intelligent liberals have always charged: namely, that our boys and girls get a perverted view of history and peoples. If peace and internationalism are to have a fighting chance with our future citizens, then our social science texts will have to be rewritten, and the teachers made over or else the seeds of hate, nationalism and 100 per cent patriotism will be scattered in the fertile minds of America's youth.

Prof. Pierce proves conclusively that as a result of the instruction in our public schools and because of the text used, our boys and girls are made so unreasonably patriotic that they get a distorted Polyanna view of our historic relations. Our imperialism in Latin America is glossed over; our Monroe Doctrine is a brotherly cloak, for the preservation of the independence of these republics from the rapacity of European imperialism.

By contrast with the laudation of American virtues, leaders and heroes, the European and oriental nations, with the exception of France, fare rather badly. England, up to the World War, is still the traditional unscrupulous bully, seeking to crush emergent democracy; the Germans, Spaniards, and Mexicans are still cruel, heartless, greedy, etc.

Of the many books examined, the geographies alone have a semblance of sanity and fairness in the presentation of material. In view of the overwhelming influence this education during the formative period has in fixing the attitudes of children and hence in the making of the adult, isn't it about time the radicals and progressives inaugurated a concert-

ed drive upon the American Legion and their ilk in order that internationalism and peace may have a fighting chance in the race between peace and catastrophe? For this work Prof. Pierce deserves the thanks of all peace loving and sane educators and workers.

ABRAHAM LEFKOWITZ.

### A GREAT LIBERAL

*The Prophet of San Francisco. Reminiscences of Henry George*, by Louis F. Post, Vanguard Press, 1930, \$3.

**T**HIS good book, published two years after the death of the author, through Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, has a place in the library of both liberals and radicals. Liberals would find comfort in the life and works of Henry George, because through them much good has permeated these years; from them has been derived a fund of idealism animating the lives of other Americans: Tom Johnson, Louis Post, and others who with little sympathy for Socialism found a stirring call to action.

Radicals, seeing through the inadequacy of the Single Tax belief, its oversimplified solution of our complicated social problems, must find in Henry George a late nineteenth century expression of revolt against the insane arrangement of our urban life. He is in the American tradition of rebels, of enemies of society, and as such, Henry George must not be lost sight of in the great empty spaces of our radical Hall of Fame.

The religious fervor with which Henry George urged this purely fiscal reform on the world was a tribute to his largeness of soul. His personal following was tremendous; his oratorical ability had the mystic appeal of an Ingersoll; and Single-taxers alive in the stirring municipal campaign of 1886 nowadays tell you with eye aglitter of the Academy of Music meetings when George the prophet spoke.

Mr. Post is wistfully reminiscent as liberals seem to become twenty years after. In his recent "Tents of the Mighty," Donald Richberg speaks similarly of the times when life seemed whole, and the solution of things simple. Regret and weariness of soul made lives of liberals prematurely tired and mellow.

Books by liberals are good because their stylistic tone is a warning to radicals. Liberals, as someone has well said, seem to be sensitive individuals with a capacity for suffering, but with little capacity to learn from their sufferings. Radicals, with a talent for experience as they must have, take defeats in stride; and with a policy of vigorous forgetting proceed triumphantly.

JOHN HERLING.

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# WHAT OUR READERS THINK

*LABOR AGE assumes no responsibility for any opinions expressed in this section. They are the personal views of the contributors.*

## MINERS UNDECIDED

Dear Editor:

After having read and reread the opinions that were expressed by the many labor leaders, editors of labor publications, professors of economics and of various others that were offered in the symposium in the October issue of LABOR AGE I am in a greater dilemma than ever before. I have tried honestly to be impartial and tolerantly open-minded about the merits of these various versions of opinions and have found the majority of them to contain some semblance of common sense. But I am as yet very much undecided as to who has the best solution of the problem.

As I am constantly in contact with a greater number of men and women who are at the present time engaged in a fight to retain and to improve their living conditions, I am therefore many times confronted with the question as to just what the present leaders are going to do about it all.

Knowing that the progressives in the Labor Movement are all watching our fight and anxiously awaiting the outcome among the Illinois miners, because it is bound to have an indirect effect on some of the other labor struggles in this country, I must admit and give them warning by saying that the rank and file of the reorganized miners are in a state of coma, not knowing just what to do or whom to follow. This is mostly due to the attitude of the leaders in their neglect to establish a goal towards which we should strive and always have in mind when something happens that tends to discourage us temporarily. All this summed up means that we are in a state of indecision and are anxious to find a way out. I want to warn, however, that anyone coming to us with ideas or principles not based on fact will be rebuked unhesitatingly.

I do not want to say that I speak for any particular organized group of workers as I have set forth just my own personal opinions and views, being partial only to the extent that I wish the miners to win this fight. But I am sure that any impartial observer will verify the truth of the above statements as pertaining to the mental state of the miners and the attitude of their leaders.

In conclusion I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate LABOR AGE for

its constructive criticism of the misleading officials of the A. F. of L. I am also sure that you will succeed in making working people see the utter fallacy of that organization's tactics toward securing proper legislation to protect them.

A MINER, Springfield, Ill.

## CLASSES FOR WOMEN WORKERS

Dear Editor:

The third year of the Workers' Morning Class is about to begin. If you want to study your own industrial problems, and their background, when you are fresh from a night's rest, not tired from the day's work, join this class. Scholarships are available to meet the expenses involved.

Two well-known teachers of workers classes are in charge of instruction. Mary R. M. Griffiths will give a course in The Expansion of Industry. Theresa Wolfson will lead a more advanced class in the study of the industrial problems that face workers. Both classes will meet on Saturday mornings and on Wednesday evenings for two terms of eight weeks each. The first unit will begin October 22, the second one on January 11. The two terms form one continuous course, but students may attend either session of eight weeks. Every student will have an opportunity to explain the facts that she has found out in writing and in classroom discussion.

The classes are a part of the program of Columbia University Extension. They are also a part of the work of the Women's Trade Union League, which, through the use of its quarters, helps make the classes possible. The classes are administered by an Advisory Committee, the chairman of which is Hilda W. Smith, Chairman of the Affiliated Summer Schools. On the committee are representatives of the Barnard and Bryn Mawr Summer Schools, the Women's Trade Union League, Columbia University Extension, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the New York Public Library.

For further information address Helen Herrmann, 21 East 92nd Street, Atwater 6729, or come to the Women's Trade Union League, 247 Lexington Avenue, and talk to the Admissions Committee.

HELEN HERRMANN,  
New York City.

## FOR LABOR UNITY

Dear Editor:

Thanks for the August Labor Age, which was received and read with inter-

est. The magazine is not entirely new to me, as I received it regularly during the La Follette campaign.

While there is much information in this August number that I am glad to have, I did not find that for which I am especially looking,—the reason why Labor is divided into a dozen or more political parties or leagues. I call to mind the Socialist, Communist, Farmer-Labor, Non-Partisan, Social-Democrat, and Single-Tax parties and a League for Industrial Democracy, a Monetary League, Equity League, and others, the names of which I do not remember. I notice these all have a common practice, in addition to their anxiety to assist Labor. They all inclose a neat slip or card, with a space where one may fill in the sum he wishes to contribute, and a "kindly sign on the dotted line."

I can see the wisdom of the capitalists having two parties to play against each other, so long as there is no other party strong enough to have any chance of election. But I believe the day any other party does become strong enough to endanger the present system, the leaders in the Republican and Democratic parties will unite their forces.

Perhaps we need yet another Labor Party; one that, in addition to collecting dues, will lend its efforts toward getting the capitalists to split up into as many parties as do the workers.

I note that you give space, under "What Our Readers Think," to the secretary of the Equity League, which is devoted to installing a system in which a person who has spent years in training for some special work is to change work hour for hour with some moron who does not know how to perform the most simple tasks.

While there may be some truth in the charge that about half the time and money of students in the medical colleges go to "filler," that has nothing whatever to do with the prevention or cure of disease, still I believe that an experienced surgeon should receive more for his time in setting a broken leg than a man who sets a fence post.

There is, to be sure, too much difference made, under the present system. Ordinarily, under this system, those who take most out of society return to society the least value.

I belong to that section of the working class that is hardest worked and poorest paid of all; and for which, when thousands of families were taxed out of their farms, a grand hoax of relief was staged. A few years ago I was an ardent

Socialist and I still take the Reading Advocate. I wish the Labor movement might do something to block another world massacre of the workers, the ever ready remedy of the capitalists when over-employment results in overproduction and its twin, under-consumption. And to this end I would like to use the time and little money I have where it will do the greatest possible good.

JULIA C. COONS,  
Brooksville, Fla.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE AND POLITICAL ACTION

Dear Editor:

Many labor leaders and intellectuals seemed to be profoundly disturbed by President William Green's honest opposition to all schemes of State unemployment insurance. They intimate, and some with greater courage, attack him for his betrayal of the workers. While I differ with President Green, I believe him to be thoroughly sincere. According to his economic and political philosophy, his position is sound and inevitable.

President Green, like all the members of the Executive Council of the A. F. of L., is essentially dominated by an individualistic and capitalistic philosophy. They accept and defend capitalism as the best economic system which needs but a little more humanitarianism and moderation to make it work; that is, give the workers a living wage. And what more than three meals a day, a radio, movies, and a schooling does a worker need?

President Green is a political individualist, who holds that workers must, through their economic organizations, do everything to further their economic needs. Hence, it would be better for the unions to provide for unemployment. President Green seems to ignore the consequences of the growth of Investment Trusts, interlocking capital, and the concentration of credit in the hands of a few capitalistic individuals and families who determine the economic policies of the country. The breakdown of his individualist philosophy, in practice, is evidenced by the enactment of Women's Compensation Laws and Old Age Pensions. If that "be paternalism" there will be more of it.

Just how could President Green's scheme of joint cooperation between industry and unions providing voluntarily for unemployment insurance, help the workers under present economic conditions? First, what about the 88 per cent of the workers who are not unionized and organized? Second, how will the American Federation of Labor leaders induce reactionary or unenlightened em-

ployers to agree to voluntary unemployment schemes? Third, what about those employers who refuse to recognize unions or who are just existing and find it impossible to finance such schemes? Fourth, what about workers who earn so little that they cannot afford contributions to insurance schemes? Fifth, what about workers in dying industries because of changing economic needs and styles? Surely mere fear of "paternalism" or state action ought not to blind intelligent labor leaders to these aspects of the question.

Unemployment insurance, under government control financed by compulsory contributions by employers and workers or by State and employers or by contributions from each factor—government, employer, worker—is inevitable under present conditions if workers are to be protected from the results of technological, seasonal and cyclical unemployment. Not only is state or government unemployment insurance inevitable, but it will have the added advantage of forcing the workers ultimately to follow a more intelligent political philosophy. Instead of the futile unworkable nonpartisan political policy, labor, having more and more to gain through the state, will be forced to unite on the political field even more effectively than it has as yet united on the industrial field. The result will be a labor party with a labor program, dominated and financed by the workers.

United and centralized capital can only be successfully challenged by powerful industrial unions, tied into a compact fighting unit under the leadership of the American Federation of Labor, using independent labor action to control and utilize the state for its own social ends.

President Green's position is the inevitable and honest result of his philosophy. The issue is: Shall the centralization and concentration of capital be challenged by an outworn economic and politically impotent philosophy as held by our labor leaders, or by the C. P. L. A. philosophy of labor united on the industrial and political field, using the government to make possible the realization of labor's lofty social ideals?

ABRAHAM LEFKOWITZ,  
E. Elmhurst, L. I.

#### WHAT NEXT?

Dear Editor:

Robert Parsons, better known by his pen-name Marcus Graham, is being threatened with deportation by the United States Government. This threat constitutes in reality an attack upon the freedom of expression in poetry.

He is charged with having in his possession a copy of "An Anthology of Revolutionary Poetry" which he edited. (This is a legally copyrighted anthology of 400 of the world's leading poets ranging from Euripides through Shakespeare to Sandburg and including the editor of "Vanity Fair.") It is on sale at all leading book stores and available at all important libraries. Or it can be purchased from us for \$3.00).

He is also charged with having been across the Mexican border to Juarez without the permit required for aliens; an accusation wholly without foundation in fact. He was arrested in California and illegally conveyed to jail in Yuma, Arizona, at the instigation of an immigration inspector stationed at that point who accused him of crossing the border five hundred miles away at El Paso, Texas. He was brought before a board of inquiry and examined behind locked doors; not given an open hearing or a public trial which he demands. These facts are cited to show the irregular nature of this entire frame-up.

Will you do these three acts in defense of liberty and poetry:  
Join the Marcus Graham Defense Committee.

Secure all possible publicity, preferably holding meetings, raising funds, calling attention to the Anthology.

WRITE OR WIRE Hon. Harry Hull, Commissioner of Immigration, Dept. of Labor, Washington, D. C., in whose hands the case finally rests, urging him to release Parsons.

The defense is being handled by the American Civil Liberties Union. The international protest is being organized by the Rebel Poets, the group of leading poets of social vision who issue the annual anthology of poems of protest "UNREST," whose president is the chairman of this committee, Ralph Cheyney.

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## IN OTHER LANDS

(Continued from Page 23)

tual tariff on the agricultural and manufactured products of the non-Empire countries for the exclusive profit of the Dominions and Britain. Snowden objected as did Thomas with some of the other cabinet members dodging. Canada demanded equal economic exchange and the leaders seized upon it for political purposes. Snowden countered with a proposal for bulk purchases on both sides. Nothing came of that. The Conference broke up without doing anything on the economic questions that plague the different and co-equal parts of the Empire. Geography and natural laws were too much for sentiment and politics.

If the economic end of the conference lacked thrilling fireworks the political end supplied enough to burn up the imperial bridges and contacts. South Africa bluntly declared its right to secede from the Empire. The Irish Free State delegate declared his country would not tolerate appeals to the Privy Council on the part of any of its citizens and that the rulings of the Privy Council must not apply to the Free State. There was talk of a compromise by having an imperial Supreme Court like in Germany but the Irish delegate would only accept it on condition that they would have the right to appeal to the Hague Court. So the conference ends with nothing done.

After having labored hard and earnestly to produce the Mines Act the government finds itself openly defied by the coal barons. It may lead to a sort of strike on the part of the barons and it may be compromised. One thing is certain if the Tories gain power in the coming general elections a desperate effort will be made to repeal the Act or the clauses that offend the coal barons. This means that the whole question of coal management will be re-opened. Parliament resumes its activity and a general election is on the horizon. Snowden's lack of flexibility with his middle class mentality may cause a split, but I do not think he will be able to make a serious breach in the ranks of labor for he is not a trade unionist; neither is Mrs. Snowden.

The Tories are enthusiastic though not wholly united and they are confident of winning. The stars with the accidents of politics and the operations of economics seem to favor them. Still I have a feeling that the usual rows in the Tory and Liberal ranks will help along the Labor Party and there is a chance of MacDonald's being returned to office again due to the strong peace psychology prevailing in Britain at present.

### PALESTINE

Geography makes Palestine important for it is on the right bank of the Suez Canal and on the high road to India. Its large Arab population compels the British to be careful for fear of Arab or Mohammedan complications in other parts of Asia. Hence the Simpson report lets the Jews down and destroys all their age long dreams of a homeland in the land of their fathers and the cradle of their race. I do not take seriously the protests of Baldwin and Lloyd George for broadly speaking MacDonald's policy is fundamentally their own in Palestine.

The principle of divide and conquer will be applied to Palestine and the two rival races will be used to suit the purposes of the imperialists. The Roman maxim will be and is amended to divide and hold. The great services rendered the British imperialists by the Jews will be forgotten, and that is why there is sympathy for the Zionists.

### NEW SOUTH WALES

Labor won a smashing victory in the most important state in the Australian Commonwealth. Fifty-one Labor Party men were elected out of a total of 90, thereby gaining a complete majority. As the opposition is divided, ex-Premier J. T. Lang will have no trouble forming a government and staying the full term in office. The victory is a sort of warning to London that Australia is behind Premier Scullin in his fight for financial independence.

### GERMANY

Fascism has shot its bolt. Hitler is nothing but a showy lightheaded leader of the middle classes who are hard pressed by taxation but who nevertheless will not fight. He afforded a most unedifying spectacle when he added race prejudice to his arsenal. The moderate Socialists have gained and both Hitlerites and Communists have lost standing with the people. The large vote given to the extremists reveal the low economic barometer of the middle class and a section of the workers. It plays into the hands of the French chauvinists. But there is no danger of the peace of Europe being wrecked by Hitler. Mountebanks don't do such things.

### SOUTH AMERICA

The revolutions in South America, while in all cases were struggles between the ins and outs, were also a conflict between the American and British capitalists. In Bolivia and Peru a regular

### Significance of the A. F. of L.'s

#### Fiftieth Convention

(Continued from Page 9)

never before in recent years to get the attention and good-will of trade unionists as well as unorganized workers. It is the issue on which we "go to the country."

It is significant that the Resolutions Committee at the Boston convention put its arguments against unemployment insurance in the form of questions! It is a long time since Matthew Woll has put his arguments in that form instead of declarations, commands and denunciations. The Wood Carvers, the Newport Central Labor Union, the United Textile Workers and the Teachers all had resolutions in on the subject. There were three favorable speeches from the floor, and much favorable sentiment in the convention. The way is wide open for progressives who have a vigorous and constructive program to challenge the present leadership and render a great service to the workers.

Thus our program for the present season is clearly and sharply defined. Attack the Hoover regime and the alliance of the A. F. of L. leadership with it. Stimulate organization activity in the existing unions and wherever possible launch forth into the unorganized big industries. Wage the battle for a sound, inclusive system of unemployment insurance, under which society through governmental agencies sees to it that the burden for providing for reserves to carry workers over bad times rests squarely upon industry.

duel is going on between the two imperialist nations over the right to exploit the countries. In the Argentine the Yankees for the moment have beaten John Bull and ruined the fine diplomatic work of Lord D'Abernon and killed the \$100,000,000 orders he had arranged for. It may mean the cancellation of the trip of the Prince of Wales to South America. In Brazil the Washington group is put on the defensive but as U. S. A. is the purchaser of 90 per cent of Brazil's coffee and most of its rubber, there is no danger. If the revolution degenerates into a struggle between the north, central and the rich progressive state of the south, Brazil may be split like central America and become like it, weak and impotent. The hands across the sea talk is translated in South America into hands in each other's pockets with Uncle Sam and John Bull the chief pickpockets and dips.

PATRICK L. QUINLAN.

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